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EGYPT

POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS DISCUSS RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM

Islamic Groups' Positions Discussed

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 11 Jun 86 pp 8-10

[Interview with Mustafa Kamil Murad, al-Dimirdash al-'Aqali, Dr Faraj Fudah and Dr Nur Farahat by Usamah 'Ajjaj: "AKHIR SA'AH Reports on Islamic Groups: Where Do Political Parties Stand on Religious Extremism?" dates and places of interviews not specified]

[Text] Mustafa Kamil Murad: "We reject terrorism totally. Islamic groups did not penetrate the Liberal Party."

Al-Dimirdash al-'Aqali: "I reject Islamic groups' violations of Islamic taboos."

Dr Faraj Fudah: "They are terrorists who use violence; they are neither a political nor a religious tendency."

Dr Nur Farahat: "Political parties are taking advantage of extremist groups."

"Defusing the violence in the university is required."

"There are Arab countries financing these groups."

A phenomenon that is not new but is dangerous has suddenly surfaced. Extremist groups want to impose their control over Egypt's universities. To do that, they chose Asyut University, and from there they moved to al-Minya University and then to the Qasr al-'Ayni College of Medicine at Cairo University. AKHIR SA'AH thought it would start a file on the extremist groups by conducting large-scale interviews with opposition party leaders who had opened their doors to the religious tendency in a step described by one intellectual as one that rides a wave and is absolutely opportunistic. The discussion was expanded, and the number of documents in the file grew after it became evident that extremist religious groups and the Muslim Brothers wanted to penetrate existing political parties and had concentrated their efforts on the Liberal Party. However, Mustafa Kamil Murad, president of the Liberal party, denied categorically that the religious tendency had a majority in his party. He affirmed that the religious tendency was a minority in the party and that its supporters cannot control his party. He denied that extremist groups had applied any pressure to

have the party's name changed or to induce it to retract its endorsement of the Camp David Accords. Al-Dimirdash al-'Aqali, vice president of the Labor Party affirmed that hidden forces were trying to drive a wedge between the religious tendency and the government. Dr Faraj Fudah and Dr Nur Farahat are among those intellectuals who are interested in the question of the religious tendency. They have been warning of its danger and of a plan by extremist groups to confuse the issues and to use religion as a tool to gain power. That is why they are taking part in this discussion.

AKHIR SA'AH's questions revolved around the religious tendency's wish to control political parties and universities. AKHIR SA'AH asked what were the differences between the factions of extremist groups? Are the Muslim Brothers responsible for these groups' terrorism?

First, AKHIR SA'AH asked Mustafa Kamil Murad if the religious tendency had penetrated legitimate political parties, particularly the Liberal Party, and if it had gained control over them.

Mustafa Kamil Murad refuted that by saying, "There has been no penetration, but there is harmony, and the religious tendency has joined the party. Penetration is a word that denotes suddenness and violence. There was no suddenness or violence when the Muslim Brothers or Muslim groups joined the Wafd, the Liberal Party or the Labor Party. The Liberal Party's program implies that the canonical law of Islam is the principal source for the constitution and the law. That was one of the Liberal Platform's principal features, proclaimed on 22 October 1975, before that platform became a party 1 year later in November 1976. We submitted to the People's Assembly several bills for the application of Islamic law, but none of these bills passed. We published AL-NUR Newspaper to shed light on the proper Islamic course in all the social, political, economic and cultural affairs of life. This newspaper is still carrying out its role successfully. Approximately 6 months ago the Liberal Party organized weekly seminars at the party's headquarters in al-Qubbah so that it could talk with Islamic groups and with Muslim Brothers about the proper Islamic course and how it should be presented to public opinion. The party was to talk to those groups about their need to join the Liberal Party so they can have a legitimate and a legal platform from which they can bring about the application of the canonical law of Islam. This means that there was no penetration and no surprise. However, the results did appear after a prolonged and a protracted struggle.

[Question] But you are talking about Islamic groups and the Muslim Brothers as though they were one group, when there are differences between them!

[Answer] The Muslim Brothers' Movement came into the picture in 1928 when it was established by the late Hasan al-Banna. It was opposed by governments before and after the revolution. Religious groups came into the picture in 1972 under al-Sadat's administration when the communist tendency gained strength in Cairo University and in other universities and al-Sadat, following the suggestions of a few people, established Islamic groups in the universities to drive away communists and stand up to them with Islamic ideas and opinions. Members of the People's Assembly and officials volunteered to sponsor those groups. However, they later became dangerous when, unbeknownst to the Socialist Union, they became widespread. And yet, they remained unable to set forth ideological and

guidance programs. There is no doubt that the Muslim Brothers have some relationship to these groups, but they are not subordinate to them in an organizational sense. There are 200 Islamic groups, and this is something that we in the Liberal Party are trying to deal with now that a few leaders of the Muslim Brothers and of Islamic groups, like Salah Abu Isma'il and Yusuf al-Badri, have joined the Liberal Party. We want the Liberal Party to become the vehicle and the framework under which all these Islamic factions can work together, acquiring significant power to influence the coming elections so as to have a large number of those who believe in the application of the canonical law of Islam elected to the People's Assembly and to the Consultative Assembly."

[Question] Don't you believe that Islamic groups, with their desire to step up the confrontation with security forces, are somehow exploiting economic conditions?

[Answer] I do not believe there is a relationship between the hard economic times and the activities of Islamic groups in Egyptian universities. Islamic groups have been carrying out their activities and controlling students' unions for several years. This is a fact, and it has nothing to do with the economic crisis. The proper solution is to have an open democratic dialogue.

[Question] But don't you think these groups are dangerous? They were able to impose their conditions on the Liberal Party, which complied with these groups' conditions, assumed a religious garb, declared it was retracting its endorsement of the Camp David Accords, and changed its name.

[Answer] The party's name was changed 3 years ago with the approval of the party's general secretariat, political office and permanent board. The name change was based on the Political Parties' Act which stipulates that political parties' programs must not depart from a democratic socialist framework. It also stipulates that political parties must not be established on a religious basis, and must not impair social peace. The question of democratic socialism has been settled, and mentioning the word, socialism, would be pointless. That is why we agreed to get rid of it because it was redundant. In addition, when we asked to join the International Liberal Union, we were asked specifically whether we were liberals or socialists. The party's program was examined and it was declared to be a liberal program. Amazement was expressed because the word, socialism, had been added, but particularly because there was a conflict between liberalism, which is espoused by the party, and socialism. There was a conflict between the party's program and name. That is why the party decided 3 years ago to get rid of the word, socialism. That has nothing to do with the party's relationship with the Muslim Brothers and with Islamic groups.

[Question] But you said at the press conference which you held to announce these decisions that most of the Islamic tendency's representatives were behind those decisions.

[Answer] I did not say that because the religious tendency has no majority in the general secretariat office which has 16 members, including 2 only from the religious tendency: al-Shaykh Yusuf al-Badri and al-Shaykh Salah Abu Isma'il.

[Question] But the religious tendency is trying to groom the party's liberal leaders and establish total control over them. And it is awaiting the next elections, isn't it?

[Answer] I do not believe the religious tendency is thinking about that. The Liberal party is based on democracy and not on imposing opinions. Party leaders are elected every 3 years from the general membership. Anyone who joins the Liberal Party becomes a member of the Liberal Party and not a member of another political society or party.

[Question] How can Mustafa Kamil Murad and the party's liberal leaders deal with the extremist religious tendency?

[Answer] I've had 29 years of experience as a parliamentarian. If I cannot talk with people of all political tendencies in Egypt, I would have to get out of politics. I am a professional politician, and it is not difficult for me to talk with Muslim Brothers or with clergymen. It all has to do with presenting all the issues objectively.

[Question] What would the Liberal Party's attitude be if a member of an Islamic group who had recently joined the Liberal party were to do something that was not endorsed or approved by the party? Would not that be taken against the party?

[Answer] Party members always act on the basis of a political program of action. These are not arbitrary matters. Party conferences and conventions are always held in accordance with a specific schedule, and the topics of discussion at those conferences and conventions are listed. That is why we do not expect any party member to do anything that would lead to a clash with the government. And why should we clash with the government when we are a legitimate party that has its offices, newspapers, platforms and articulate spokesmen in both the People's Assembly and the Consultative Assembly?

[Question] But the question still remains: Can the party exercise tight control on its members who are also members of Islamic groups in the university?

[Answer] We give those young people in the party an opportunity to put their opinions in writing in the party's three newspapers. We give them an opportunity to debate the party's leaders on the highest level; and we give them the opportunity to criticize and to blame those leaders. We are doing that to help them develop a balanced and fearless political character that cannot be intimidated. That is why we believe that their presence in the Liberal Party puts their energy to use in the party's legitimate and legal work: they call for the application of Islamic law; they recruit a number of young people; they register them in the roster of voters; and they run for office in the elections.

[Question] What is the Liberal Party's point of view about the terrorist activities that are being perpetrated by the groups?

[Answer] We reject terrorism absolutely because there is no evidence throughout history that it has yielded positive results. The results of terrorism have rather been negative. Al-Qadhdhafi is the most recent example of that. As a

reaction to his terrorism and his assistance to terrorism, airplanes bombed Libya.

[Question] The question about terrorism referred to those terrorist events that occurred in Asyut.

[Answer] What happened in Asyut was the work of a few young individuals who are members of Islamic groups. But these people can be easily disciplined and dealt with through dialogue. Young people are extremely eager to say what goes on in their minds, whether it is right or wrong. They want to express themselves. If they are prevented from doing that, their conduct will be affected and their behavior in some instances will be considered violent. But Islam has nothing to do with such conduct.

[Question] What about the provocation that al-Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman stirs up everywhere he goes? This happened in Asyut, in al-Minya and in Aswan. And what about the confrontations between young people and police?

[Answer] I cannot talk about what 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman does because I have not yet sat with him. He is not a member of the Liberal Party, although I hope he will join the party soon. He has not agreed to join, but he has not turned down the invitation to join the party either.

[Question] What about the conflict over the veil issue between Islamic groups and Dr Hashim Fu'ad, the dean of the College of Medicine?

[Answer] Students have the right to wear anything they want to wear, and they are free to do so. Female students also have the right to wear a veil. But I do not believe that wearing a veil during business hours is called for because this has nothing to do with Islam. It is enough for a female student to cover her hair and her arms, but not her hands and her face. There is nothing in Islam or in the prophetic tradition that would require a woman to cover her hands and her face. From an objective standpoint Hashim Fu'ad may be right.

Muslim Brothers Penetrate Political Parties

Justice al-Dimirdash al-'Aqali, vice president of the Labor Party says this about himself: "My organizational relationship with the Muslim Brothers ended in March 1954. At that time I was involved with the tendency whose confidence in President Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir was very strong. That tendency also wanted Hasan al-Hudaybi removed from his position as grand master of the organization. A decision to expel me from the Muslim Brothers Organization was made as of that date, and I have had no relationship with the Muslim Brothers Organization."

[Question] Do you believe there is a connection between Islamic groups and the Muslim Brothers?

[Answer] I believe that to all scholars of the Egyptian political movement it has been established historically that the western notion of the secular school of thought had dominated the political scene since the early days of British colonialism. Imam al-Banna was the first to restore to the hearts of the Egyptian people the feeling that their historical identity as well as their

future lie in a return to Islam. Since 1928 Hasan al-Banna had set forth Islam in a sound way that adhered to conventional laws. He did not refrain from participating in any national occasion, and he even declared himself a candidate in the 1942 parliamentary elections which were boycotted by all political parties in Egypt as a protest against the Wafd after the 4 February incident. It is extremely unfortunate that al-Nahhas and the Wafd declined to talk with the forces of the Islamic Movement and refused to allow Hasan al-Banna the right to run for office in Ismailia, forcing him to give up the race. It was this confiscation of his constitutional right that generated in al-Banna's mind the idea that existing conditions were not conducive to a peaceful intellectual dialogue. He reacted to that by establishing a special agency or secret organization so that preparations for changing the regime could be made. This agency is the one whose foremost three members from the military establishment were the late Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir, 'Abd-al-Mun'im 'Abd-al-Ra'uf and Khalid Muhyi-al-Din. It was the interference with its peaceful course that made the Islamic Movement turn to secret organizations.

[Question] But it is known historically that the secret organization started in 1938, didn't it?

[Answer] What started on that date was the idea of scouting, and that later turned to underground activity.

[Question] What about the so-called Muslim Brothers' wish to penetrate political parties?

[Answer] I believe that what has been stirred up recently about the Muslim Brothers' penetration of political parties is due to the fact that they had to join political parties. This is another indication of their wish to play a peaceful political role through which they could set forth their comprehensive Islamic view. Muslim Brothers had to join political parties because of the position assumed by some of them, but not all of them. Some Muslim Brothers refuse to join political parties whose slogans and substance are not Islamic. Therefore, they must be allowed to establish an Islamic party or organization so they would not have to join political parties. Then they would face people, and people would face them without any equivocation.

[Question] Don't you believe that this is a case that goes beyond having to sympathize with political parties? The fact that Salah Abu Isma'il represents them in the Liberal Party is an indication of that. Your presence in the Labor Party, the presence of People's Assembly members in the Wafd opposition as well as the continuing incidents with the Ummah Party provide evidence of that.

[Answer] I believe it has been established that they felt obliged to join political parties; that is unequivocal. There can be no homogeneous manner of expression when one has to do something. This explains why some Muslim Brothers had to join the People's Assembly as individuals in the previous Wafd Party. Because I believe in a socialist Islamic solution, and because I have to become involved in political activity, I found the Labor Party the most appropriate and the most capable vehicle for political and partisan activity.

History Bypassed the Muslim Brothers

[Question] Don't you believe there is a clear difference between Muslim Brothers and Islamic groups?

[Answer] The Muslim Brothers' Movement, which grew in the forties, dealt with the problems of a simple society that was concerned exclusively with gaining total independence from Britain. It was a society that wanted to manifest the Islamic character along with the developments that came about one after the other as the atheist left emerged on the scene. The fact that Egypt's doors were open to intellectual schools of thought which were free to act despite their opposition to religion made it necessary for the new rising Muslim leaders to change their view of matters. They were now facing communism and Zionism and looking for their Islamic roots. They were facing subordination and looking for a formula for economic sufficiency. The Muslim Brothers' older veterans were not qualified to face such a novel proposal. A marginal dispute occurred, but it was not over the objective that was being sought, which is to achieve an Islamic solution, but rather over the ways by means of which it can be achieved.

[Question] You are then affirming, are you not, that the difference between Muslim Brothers and Islamic groups and the religious tendency's crisis as well are due in part to the Muslim Brothers' old guard?

[Answer] I have the evidence. The grand master of the Muslim Brothers, 'Umar al-Talmasani, may God have mercy on his soul, was a man from the old generation. He was from Hasan al-Banna's school, which was founded on expecting the best from a sovereign and from the subjects. Al-Banna was tireless in his efforts, knocking on government's doors and pleading for its recognition of his legitimate status. He was tireless in the legal actions he took in that regard, even though he was at some point in time close to President al-Sadat. Such a man no longer provides a persuasive role model for the growing Islamic tendency whose members regard such a course of action as an exercise in futility. The government, deliberately or inadvertently affirms that view of this course of action when it neither listens to nor complies with the requests of al-Shaykh 'Umar and his colleagues. It is this which affirms to young people the message that their extremism is the proper approach and al-Talmasani's moderation is the wrong one.

[Question] This means that the undisciplined practices of Islamic groups which occurred frequently last month were clearly justified. And that led a few people to affirm that these Islamic groups wanted to exacerbate the situation.

[Answer] I see nothing in all the incidents that occurred recently to indicate that all or some Islamic groups are resorting to exacerbating the situation with the government. I also do not believe that the government is trying to exacerbate the situation with them. These events are merely convulsions of the Islamic Movement which is being denied the ability to use its energies and to operate in legitimate channels. Consequently, it is trying to establish its presence and find an outlet for its energy in a lecture by one of its professors or in a student or trade union gathering.

Extremism about the Veil

[Question] How then do you account for al-Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman's field trips which result in confrontations between the groups and police? The most recent such confrontation was in Aswan, a city that had no Islamic tendency.

[Al-Dimirdash al-'Aqali] 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman is a Muslim missionary who is convinced that his field trips constitute an appeal for the cause of God. There are birthdays of saints and holy people every day. Let's not forget that 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman ordered young people not to go out in a demonstration and to disperse in peace, and that is what they did.

[Question] What about the wish to exacerbate the situation?

[Answer] I believe that the wish to exacerbate the situation is being contrived by forces on the scene whose identity is not clearly known. The government does not want a confrontation, nor are the Islamic groups seeking one.

[Question] How do you explain the incidents in which students and professors were attacked in Asyut? How do you explain the controversy over the veil in the Qasr al-'Ayni College of Medicine at Cairo University?

[Answer] I reject the Islamic groups' attacks on Muslims' taboos. In Islam a man and a woman are not to be questioned when seen. It is assumed they are married, and they are not to be questioned unless they are involved in an indecent act. Questioning the relationship between a man and a woman is heresy in Islam. With regard to the veil, there are imams with moderate points of view, and there are others whose views are extremist. It seems that when it comes to the question of the veil, Islamic groups are calling for the extremist opinion. What is required now is support for moderate solutions. With such support extremism will come to an end.

[Question] The subject of the Islamic groups' violence generated in the interview violence from the other side, that is, from the secularists. We found Dr Faraj Fudah calling upon the government to use violence in dealing with the Islamic tendency. Where are we headed?

[Answer] I believe that when al-Sadat amended the constitution, he created some kind of protection for Islamic groups because they are asking for the application of an article in the constitution. But when Faraj Fudah speaks, he becomes the only one who deserves to be put on trial because he is impeding the application of the constitution. Five bills have been ready since 1981: those on legal punishments and those that have to do with the civil, commercial and maritime code. When a new assembly was convened, it was announced that the laws had failed to pass. And even when the Wafd opposition got what it wanted from the Muslim Brothers, it did not introduce these bills.

The Terrorism of Extremist Groups

It is Dr Faraj Fudah who has the "honor" of affirming the danger of extremist religious tendencies and the "courage" of confronting them. He was the first one to call candidly for the separation of religion from the state in the wake

of the "ambivalence" shown by existing political parties on that issue and their flirtations with these groups.

[Question] Do you believe that existing political parties can hold and accommodate Islamic groups given the fact that political parties want them to join?

[Dr Faraj Fudah] I do not believe that Islamic groups will ever accept a formula for a partisan solution because their way of thinking is in part based on their effort to utilize violent means to bring about change and to reject the status quo.

[Question] But the Muslim Brothers were satisfied with that solution. The fact that they joined the Wafd and conducted a dialogue with the Ummah Party proves that.

[Answer] As far as I know the Muslim Brothers Organization is one of the religious political groups that accept involvement in political activity. It is one of the most moderate such groups. Despite the words of caution that have been spoken in that regard, it would be in the interests of political life in Egypt that Muslim Brothers have a political party. Some people think that the basic principle for political parties is that they represent all Egyptians and not a specific ideological affiliation. Those people think that the emergence of the Muslim Brothers as a political party would result in the emergence of other Christian parties, and that would lead to sectarian division. In my opinion, this fear is unfounded. One of the reasons why it is unfounded is that history has shown that Copts do not turn to secular parties like the old Wafd. Attempts to establish Coptic parties like that of (Akhanun Fanus) have failed. In addition, if the Muslim Brothers have a political party, they will be forced to come up with a political program, and that is something they do not have yet. The benefits of having a political party for the Muslim Brothers and of coming up with a political program are important for numerous reasons, including an awareness that would develop of how civilized Islam is with regard to politics and how ignorant the hard-liners are about the magnitude of theological differences in political matters. Muslim Brothers would not then penetrate political parties as they penetrated the Labor and Liberal parties. Al-Dimirdash al-'Aqali would not be serving as vice president of the Labor Party, and Salah Abu Isma'il and Yusuf al-Badri would not be serving in the Liberal Party. Muslim Brothers also penetrated the Wafd as delegates to the People's Assembly, and they penetrated the Ummah Party as a prayer circle. In addition, such penetration adds nothing to the status quo. The Muslim Brothers are here; they have guidance offices; they have a grand master; they have members in the People's Assembly; they have newspapers defending them; and they have publishing houses that express their views.

[Question] Then you support that point of view which tends to see fundamental differences between Islamic groups and the Muslim Brothers, don't you?

[Answer] Yes, the Muslim Brothers Organization is a political, religious tendency, and the Islamic groups are a terrorist tendency. They are terrorist organizations like the Badermeinhof, the Red Army in Japan and the Red Brigades in Italy.

[Question] Some people, however, have called attention to the error of what you've recently called for. You've called for the use of violence, brutality and the police in opposing Islamic groups.

[Answer] Those people are forgetting that these Islamic groups are terrorists and that they have to be treated on that basis to protect the state's dignity and citizens' security. I do not understand why anyone should use violence or weapons to force an opinion or values on others. I do not understand how anyone could espouse the principle of physical elimination and assassination and then call that tendency a political tendency!

The Dispute between Muslim Brothers and Islamic Groups

[Question] But an Egyptian has submitted a doctoral dissertation in which he denies that there is a dispute between Islamic groups and the Muslim Brothers.

[He claims] that the dispute begins after people get to power.

[Answer] Members of the religious tendency come together when matters require proof of the tendency's existence or a declaration of its power, as was the case in Hafiz Salamah's march. That was also the case at 'Umar al-Talmasani's funeral. Afterwards, however, followers of the religious tendency go their separate ways. As far as I know, they have to go their separate ways because each one of them has his own agenda. The Muslim Brothers still reject Sayyid Qutb's ideas, and they refuse to acknowledge him as a man who at one time was the leader of their organization. If that continues to be their position, there can be no agreement between them and the groups because these groups were the brainchild of Sayyid Qutb.

[Question] Do you believe there is a relationship between the economic crisis and the growing tension that has been experienced recently in the universities?

[Answer] I believe that this is due principally to the state's withdrawal. The state withdrew because poor judgment was exercised in the decisive confrontation with the groups.

What is happening in sessions of the People's Assembly when some denominations or ideologies are renounced may also have the same interpretation. That is why Islamic groups stepped up their activities in the face of what they perceived to be the state's withdrawal. To that one may add economic conditions, the continuing rivalry among parties and the continued method of intra-religious dialogue in newspapers and the media. This legitimizes what they are calling for. There are two courses: the state is either a religious state first, or it is a secular state. If it is a religious state, then the authority on everything, from politics to soccer players' uniforms, is what Islam has to say about it; and what the Koran, the prophetic tradition and the authorities on jurisprudence have to say about everything is sought. If the state is a civilian state, then it is the constitution, the law and the Human Rights Charter that become the authority on everything. It is my contention that we have a civilian state, and I pray that we stay that way. There are others--and I agree with them--who believe that the constitution, the civil code and the Human Rights Charter are not incompatible with Islam.

[Question] Al-Dimirdash al-'Aqali has demanded that you be tried in court for impeding the implementation of the constitution with your opposition to the canonical law of Islam which is considered the principal source of legislation. What do you think about that?

[Answer] And I am demanding that al-Dimirdash al-'Aqali be tried in court for encroaching upon the constitution. He stated that it is the "only source" [sic], whereas the constitution states that it is the "principal source." [Translator's note: "It" here most probably refers to the canonical law of Islam.] This does not mean that there are no other sources. I believe that in this regard the constitution did not introduce anything new: Islam is the source of 90 percent of our laws, which do not conflict with the canonical law of Islam. Accordingly, the canonical law of Islam is the principal source [of our laws]. In addition, the constitution allows one to disagree; it even allows for changes to be made in the constitution in the manner defined by the constitution itself. Islamic groups that proclaim this slogan and cite the constitution do not accept the political regime that is mentioned in the constitution, nor do they accept multiple parties. They do not accept freedom of opinion or freedom of religion, and when one argues that the constitutional referendum which was conducted strengthens and supports that provision, they respond by saying that the same referendum supported the peace treaty whose provisions they reject and whose supporters they renounce at all times.

[Question] What do you envision for the future of the religious tendency? Will the future actually be in their favor as they proclaim it will be?

[Answer] That is not true. There is a factor which is in favor of all society. It is the time and age factor. I believe that anyone who joins Islamic groups in his youth, in his years of recklessness, between the ages of 20 and 30, is heartless; and I believe that anyone who stays in these groups after the age of 30 is mindless. The second point is that the state has to take notice of the fact that a large part of this phenomenon is due to the emotional disturbances that are becoming widespread among the people because of wars, economic crises and violent political changes. A large part of what we see demonstrates the split between those individuals and society. Evidence for this can be found in something I read recently about these groups calling for the domestic policy [sic] to be abolished and [attention devoted to] the domestic policy exclusively. In their opinion this includes "visiting graveyards to apply the principle that one is to visit graveyards when one feels depressed." The second kind [of activity included in this approach] has to do with getting rid of the body's wastes in wide open spaces because doing that is healthy for one's body and soul. Is there any greater split than that? The third point is that the state has to regain its dignity by putting this phenomenon under control. If a student who uses a switchblade knife [to attack others] or who strikes his professor realizes that he will be expelled from the university once and for all, he will give his actions a lot of thought; but if he realizes that he will become a hero if he commits such actions, this phenomenon will grow.

The Parties' Attitude Is Opportunistic

Dr Nur Farahat, one of those who are interested in this phenomenon, identifies the true beginnings of the religious tendency in the region. He says:

"The birth of the religious tendency goes back to the time when the Ottoman state and all the ideas it represented as the foremost defender of Islam collapsed. The collapse of the Ottoman state coincided with the adoption of European civilization. There was a reaction to that, and there was an appeal to go back to the past. Although what Muhammad 'Ali did was a good alternative to the collapse of the Caliphate, it was a threat to European countries who joined forces to abort it. That helped the other alternative to emerge, and that alternative was to go back to Islam and to the ways of the ancestors. That alternative demanded that the state be managed by the principal elements which were employed in the management of the Ottoman state. The clash between Islam and the appeal to return to the past [on one side], and the tendency to adopt development [on the other] emerged not only in Egypt, but also in Turkey where one of the Turkish sultans was deposed by a formal legal opinion issued by the Grand Mufti of Muslims in Turkey. The sultan was deposed because he had introduced modern management. A motion to attempt codifying the canonical law of Islam and adopt a few western laws was rejected. Two tendencies have emerged since then: one calls for a return to the past, and the other calls for adopting civilization. It is unfortunate that while other countries talk about new ideas and move on to even newer ideas, we are still involved in this issue which appears for a while and then disappears only to surface once again. When Napoleon came to Egypt, he wanted lanterns placed in front of people's homes and he wanted to conduct the first census of the population. But this was totally rejected for being against religion. It is unfortunate that Hafiz Salamah is affirming the same thing. He is calling for a return to the golden ages of Islam before it came under the influence of western civilization."

[Question] What in your opinion is the reason why this debate over these issues which may be self evident is still continuing?

[Answer] I think it is because no intellectual and national movement has emerged and tried to combine in one formula the positive ingredients of religious and secular thought so that society's progress can be achieved. The few who attempted to do that, like al-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, did not have influence that was strong enough to stand up to hard-liners, like Rashid Rida and Abu-al-A'la al-Mawdudi, who are proponents of other ideas. It is this that was behind the birth of the Muslim Brothers.

[Question] Does this mean that the Muslim Brothers set forth the alternative to religious and secular thinking?

[Answer] The Society of Muslim Brothers started out by calling people to the path of God with wisdom and kindly exhortation. The society denied that it was a political party, but it did not believe in democratic liberalism because it was a vestige of western culture. The Society of Muslim Brothers did not have a clearly defined social or political plan, and it was satisfied with the slogan, "The Koran is our constitution; the messenger is our leader; and fighting for the cause of God is our noblest objective." But no one asked members of the society which laws would be applied to the changing social and economic reality. The Muslim Brothers started out as a religious movement, and they ended up as a political movement. It is to their credit that they took part in fighting the British, but their activity always ended up in a clash with authorities--and that happened in 1948, in 1954, and in 1975. These clashes ended with the physical elimination of the Muslim Brothers.

[Question] What is the attitude of political parties in Egypt toward the growth of this phenomenon?

[Answer] It is curious that political parties' attitudes have basically been opportunistic. This is particularly true of the Labor Party and the Wafd. The latter, which is considered a secular party founded on the unity of the crescent and the cross, has betrayed its heritage and abandoned it for a handful of votes so it can enter the People's Assembly. The Wafd allied itself with the Muslim Brothers. In addition, there is the attitude of the Ummah Party. I believe that the only solution is to establish a party for Islamic groups. That will make it necessary for them to come up with a social, political and economic program that would help set forth a view for solving problems. These Islamic groups would then become just another party. We have to delete from the Political Parties' Act that provision which prohibits the establishment of a political party on a religious basis.

[Question] Some people are affirming that the torture which they faced in prison was behind the fact that they surfaced once again in the seventies.

[Answer] Yes, the Muslim Brothers were tortured in prisons, but they were not the only ones who were. However, they did use the torture issue to their advantage. There are other factors which contributed to their presence. After Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi presented his unification plan, which was rejected by the power centers who were removed from their positions because of their opposition to it, President al-Sadat encouraged the establishment of Islamic groups so they could thwart the left in the universities. In addition, the creation of these groups created some kind of agreement with al-Qadhdhafi's inclination to apply the canonical law of Islam. This represents the steps that occurred in the transformation of the Islamic idea into a tool to be used in political maneuvers. There are still many questions about the cooperation between Ashraf Marawan and al-Qadhdhafi to thwart leftists in the early seventies.

[Question] Don't you believe that the intellectual vacuum is responsible for increasing the influence of Islamic groups?

[Answer] The intellectual vacuum was in fact the reason why Islamic groups attracted a large number of young people. There was no persuasive intellectual alternative around which Egyptians could rally, given the inability of Marxism to set forth an alternative program, and also given the downfall of 'Abd-al-Nasir's image in the eyes of his admirers and the Egyptian public. All these factors contributed to the emergence of people who were actually illiterate politically and young people who were frustrated. Thus, the alternative became a deep-seated desire in Egyptians' hearts to go back to the past, and that manifested itself in religious demands. It led to the advancement of Islamic groups which became the only organized force capable of attracting the masses to their side.

[Question] Do you believe that foreign powers may be behind the growth of these groups?

[Answer] It is certain that some Arab countries are financing these groups, and there is no doubt that Israel is delighted with the division of Egyptian society on religious bases because that justifies its own existence. Specialists know that Israeli pressure groups in the United States are watching centers for Middle East studies because they provide them with neutral and truthful information. In documents by the State Department's Middle East Section I read that the region will be facing sectarian divisions: in Egypt and Lebanon there will be division between Druze, Shi'ites and Maronites; in Iraq, it will be between Arabs and Kurds; in Syria, it will be between Alawites and Sunnis; in Sudan, between the Christian south and the Muslim north. Wittingly or unwittingly Muslim groups and their ideologies are moving in the same directions.

[Question] The last question is about that alternative which is available and which can deal with this phenomenon.

[Answer] The alternative lies in the establishment of a good economic plan that can eliminate the sense of frustration and deprivation. It lies in the establishment of a liberal political plan through which all political tendencies can clearly express themselves. These are the two alternatives to fighting these groups whose roles have grown so much that they are offering people therapy, clothing and assistance in educating the young and finding them wives as well. And then we wonder why young people respond to these groups!

Muslim Brothers' Leader Interviewed

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 11 Jun 86 p 11

[Interview with Salih Abu Raqiq, a Muslim Brothers' leader: "What Is the Truth about the Relationship between Muslim Brothers and Islamic Groups and the Difference between Them?" date and place of interview not specified]

[Text] Salih Abu Raqiq: "We disagree with them about clashing with the government, ... and 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman is a stern man."

"They are followers of Sayyid Qutb, and they are portrayed by events to be bigger than they really are."

What is the truth about the relationship between Islamic groups and the Muslim Brothers, and are there differences between them? Do they have a plan to penetrate political parties in Egypt? Are Islamic groups the Muslim Brothers' secret organization? What are the struggles for leadership which are threatening these groups from within? What is the Muslim Brothers' position on the Islamic groups' terrorism? Salih Abu Raqiq, a Muslim Brothers' leader since Hasan al-Banna, rejects the violence and hard-line approach that is pursued by Islamic groups and al-Jihad Organization. He speaks with AKHIR SA'H quite candidly.

[Question] Some observers are watching the plan that is being carried out by the Muslim Brothers and by Islamic groups as well to gain control over political life and political parties by attempting to penetrate these parties. These observers state that the Muslim Brothers have an official presence in the ranks of the Wafd party. In addition, they are engaged in a dialogue with the Ummah Party; they penetrated the Liberal Party; and they gained control over a few

leadership positions in the Labor Party. This means that the Muslim Brothers have a presence in four out of six political parties. What is the truth about this plan?

[Answer] Such "penetration" never crossed our minds. This is a term used by others to describe what we did. Everything we did has been unambiguous. Our agreement with the Wafd was a temporary agreement that was made for the elections to enable us to overcome the obstacle of entering the People's Assembly. We are Muslim Brothers, and they are members of the Wafd Party.

There is cooperation that does not generate assimilation. That was evident in the agreement between Mr 'Umar al-Talmasani, may God have mercy on his soul, and Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din. I was present when the agreement was made, and at that time al-Talmasani said, "We are thinking about having our own entity." Siraj-al-Din said then, "That is normal." However, newspapers attacked us, considering our agreement with the Wafd penetration of the party, when it was not.

[Question] What about distracting the Liberal Party and the gradual penetration and control of that party?

[Answer] The Liberal Party proposed that we join it after its agenda is modified and Islamic ideas are adopted. The party will then call for the application of Islamic law. The Liberal Party proposed that we have 50 percent of all its organizations. But it would be difficult for Muslim Brothers to join any party that is not headed by one of them. It is also necessary to discuss such a subject with the Muslim Brothers' general membership because we have to consult with each other about our affairs. [Deliberations on] such a proposal would take some time, but then there was Mr 'Umar al-Talmasani's illness, and that caused the talks to be postponed.

[Question] But significant progress had been made in these talks with the Ummah Party, isn't that right?

[Answer] Joining the Ummah Party is the only thing we can do. When Ahmad al-Sabahi took over the party, he offered Mr al-Talmasani the party's presidency, but Mr al-Talmasani declined and I don't know why. Then there was a second round of talks when the late Fu'ad Muhyi-al-Din was still alive. Mr Fu'ad Muhyi-al-Din warned him against continuing these talks, which were resumed recently. I had a long meeting with him during which we discussed the matter. He presented all the positions, and he set the condition that he have 19 members in the Central Committee and that we have 11. I asked that we have equal representation on the committee and that he, as president of the party, have the deciding vote. Then he requested that the matter be presented to the political office, and he asked me to attend that meeting. But my brother's death kept me from following through with this matter. Nevertheless, the door is still open.

[Question] What about the Labor Party?

[Answer] We respect that party. There are a few good persons [in that party] who are good Muslims, and we will cooperate with them. However, what they offer does not come close to what the Ummah Party and the Liberal Party offered us.

[Question] Is this a plan by Muslim Brothers to gain control over the lives of political parties in Egypt?

[Answer] That is not true at all. The fact of the matter is this: our current situation is abnormal.

I recall that when I was a member of the Political Office of the Misr Party which was headed by Mamduh Salim, I found out that there was a bill for political parties whose Article Four prohibited the establishment of a party on a religious basis. If we were to register our party on a religious basis, since Islam is a religion, the party would be prohibited. We would find that Article 23 of the law punishes by imprisonment anyone who finds or establishes a political party of significance under the guise of a society, organization or anything else. So I resigned.

The Muslim Brothers' Relationship with Islamic Groups

[Question] The role of Islamic groups and the role of Muslim Brothers have been confused recently. In explaining the relationship between these organizations some people said that Islamic groups could be the secret organization for the publicly declared Muslim Brothers' leaders. What is the relationship between them, and what is the Muslim Brothers' position on Islamic groups?

[Answer] Islamic groups and the idea of renunciation grew in prisons where a group of people called "the decade squad" were serving 10-year sentences. In the late sixties the authorities had brought these people together in Abu Za'bal Prison. Three of them had been in Turah Penitentiary where the late Sayyid Qutb had been imprisoned. The three came out of the penitentiary with Qutb's ideas, although it is my judgment that they overstated those ideas.

At Abu Za'bal Prison a Muslim Brother informed me about some of Sayyid Qutb's ideas. So I asked one of the closest people to him, his brother Muhammad Qutb, what the truth was. He said, "Is it not true that he who makes judgments that are based on a law other than God's law is considered a non-believer?"

I said, "Yes, he would be a non-believer."

He said, "And is it not true that he who accepts judgments made by such a non-believer is a non-believer like him?" So I asked him to explain the concept to me and not to question me. He said, "Numerous books have been written about this concept, and many young people will be executed." So I ended the discussion and went to Mr al-Hudaybi and presented the case to him. He summoned [Sayyid Qutb's followers] one at a time, and he talked with them. Muhammad Qutb was one of those who were summoned. Mr al-Hudaybi wrote his well-known book, "Du'ah la Qudah" [Advocates, not Judges], and that book had a tremendous influence on curbing their activity.

I believe that no one can control these people but the Muslim Brothers. Our relationship with young moderates in the groups is quite good. However, extremist groups and hard-liners are not close to us.

[Question] If Mr al-Hudaybi did publish the book, "Du'ah la Qudah," to resist the idea of renouncing society which had emerged with Sayyid Qutb's ideas, what did the Muslim Brothers do in response to what 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman wrote in his book, "Kilmah Haqq" [A Word of Truth]? In that book Mr 'Abd-al-Rahman devoted scores of pages to a discussion about renouncing the ruler. Some people considered that book to be a development of Sayyid Qutb's ideas that went beyond those ideas in its treatment of renunciation.

[Answer] Our activity in this area is not clear to some people because the existence of the Muslim Brothers Organization is not legal. The facts affirm that no one but the Muslim Brothers stood up to those ideas and protected young people from their danger. After we got out of prison, we made an effort, and the result of that effort was that we curbed such ideas which are now quite limited.

[Question] Al-Hudaybi was able to publish his book while he was in prison, and he did so under extremely difficult circumstances. What did the Muslim Brothers do after they were given their freedom and after their release from prison?

[Answer] Mr al-Hudaybi's book still does an adequate job of rebutting those ideas. There is no need for another book. I admit that there are differences between us and the extremist tendencies over the course of action.

The Battle Is not with the Government

[Question] What are those differences between you and Islamic groups?

[Answer] The basic difference we have has to do with the fact that our battle now is not with the government, but they are making every effort to oppose the government and to clash with it.

[Question] Don't you believe that desperate attempts are being made by al-Jihad Organization to exacerbate the situation with the government and take advantage of current economic conditions?

[Answer] They do not have the political acumen which would make them try to take advantage of the current economic crisis and exacerbate the situation. But they do have enthusiasm. Ideas are to be resisted by ideas because violence makes those who practice it more determined [sic?].

[Question] There are those who hold the Muslim Brothers responsible for the Islamic groups' terrorism, particularly since these groups were offshoots of the Muslim Brothers Organization.

[Answer] They were not offshoots of the Muslim Brothers Organization. These groups were followers of Sayyid Qutb, and they are a minority. They are not more than a handful of people.

Violence and al-Jihad Organization

[Question] But Islamic groups, which include al-Jihad, the followers of Sayyid Qutb, and Hizballah, have control now over the students' unions in the universities.

[Answer] The events portray them to be larger than they really are, and the largest organization is al-Jihad Organization. Unfortunately, the president of that organization, Dr 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman is a hard-liner. It is my opinion that violence, as a method, is foolish, unwise and suicidal. Our experiences have made that evident, inducing us to stay away from that method. In general, one can come to an understanding with al-Jihad Organization, which is not as dangerous as Taha al-Samawi's group and other groups are.

[Question] Don't you believe that the Islamic groups' terrorism--and the terrorism of al-Jihad Organization in particular--benefited from the experiences of the Muslim Brothers' private organization? That organization, which does not have a good reputation, carried out numerous political assassinations before July 1953. It also tried to carry out other violent acts during 'Abd-al-Nasir's administration.

[Answer] Al-Nuqrashi and Justice al-Khazindar were the only ones we assassinated. Al-Nuqrashi was assassinated because he betrayed the national cause. I heard Mr Hasan al-Banna saying, "These bullets hit my chest."

He was killed by two zealous Muslim Brothers after a few young men were apprehended on their way to the British Club. These young men had been carrying bombs which they did not use, but they received the maximum punishment.

These days, however, when al-Nabawi Isma'il was minister of the interior, he asked Mr 'Umar al-Talmasani to intervene to solve some problems. This happened in the case of al-Zawiyah al-Hamra' and al-Qasr al-'Ayni. He thus succeeded in opposing the young fanatics.

The Danger of Those Looking for Leadership

[Question] Speaking of Mr 'Umar al-Talmasani, may God have mercy on his soul, questions are being asked about those who are trying to inherit the leadership role of the religious tendency. What is the truth about that?

[Answer] In the absence of a legitimate presence for that tendency, a few people claimed such leadership. Had the Muslim Brothers been in the picture, none of this would have happened.

One day when he was minister of the interior I met with Maj Gen Hasan Abu Basha, and I had a long talk with him. I told Maj Gen Abu Basha, "God spared President Mubarak the evils of previous rulers. His slate with us is a clean one." I presented our case to him, and I discussed with him the danger of the extremist tendency and how we might deal with it.

I also met with Dr al-Mahjub to discuss this issue.

[Question] But there are those who affirm that because of the dangers to which the religious, political tendency is exposed, the reasons for its failure are inherent in it.

[Answer] I believe that the religious tendency is facing several dangers.

The obvious danger has to do with the differences between the factions of the Islamic tendency. Mr al-Banna used to say, "We have to work together on what we agree about, and we have to appreciate each other when we disagree." There are general issues about which we have to agree, but having disagreements about the matter of the veil and jellabah is something we are not accustomed to.

The other and more significant danger has to do with the search for leadership by a few people and the lack of respect for other people's opinions.

Islamic Groups' Violence Explored

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 18 Jun 86 pp 3-5

[Article by Muhammad Wajdi Qandil: "Muhammad Wajdi Qandil Writes about Events of the Hour, Religious Extremism; What Will Become of Islamic Groups? The Hypocrisy of Opposition Parties and Demonstrations To Test Strength; Why Is There Violence? What Is behind the Groups? The Truth behind the Story of 'Abbud al-Zumur's Disappearance"]

[Text] What will become of these groups which are offshoots of the Islamic Movement? What will become of them?

What will become of their hidden intentions, as they lurk and hide behind religion? What will become of their undeclared plan, now that they have come out of the cave?

How far will this religious extremism go with the violence, terrorism and renunciation of the ruler and society?

And how can this religious extremism be opposed? Can it be opposed with dialogue and ideas, or with the law and a firm hand so that security and stability can be preserved?

The question has its implications, its roots and its complexities. Behind it lies an assortment of events spanning scores of years; and behind it are the hidden sequels of what happened in previous administrations, either before or after the July Revolution. The question is the product of the violence and counterviolence which are being perpetrated in the name of Islam.

That is why the question calls for objective discussion and an enlightened opinion to clarify the outlook to generations of young people who are confused by the murkiness of religious extremism and yet are drawn to it under the influence of its devout and pious rhetoric.

There is nothing wrong with promoting Islam if that is done wisely and with kind exhortation. In fact, the door is wide open to such efforts that are being made to reach people's minds by interpreting the religion and making independent judgments. There is no objection to efforts that may be made by using either lenient methods or calm persuasion to make people understand religion and to instill in them spiritual values. Nor is there any harm in urging people to practice the rites of religion, commanding them to do good and forbidding them from doing evil within the limits of Islam's magnanimous precepts.

Indeed, it is quite all right to do that. In fact, it is required that young people be educated and society be shown the way to the morals and values which draw people to religion.

But this must be done without coercion and constraint; it must be done without intellectual terrorism and without renouncing Muslims.

Young people are to be taught and society is to be guided without resorting to inflexible ideas and independent judgments that are made in accordance with an extremist school of thought which dates back to our ancestors. This must be done without resorting to terrorism and violence to force ideas on others. But this is what these groups are trying to do in the name of Islam and under its auspices. And that is what is unacceptable under any name. In fact, it is rejected by true Islam and by its magnanimous message.

Without any bias I wonder as others do: Is there anything Islamic about a Muslim committing offenses against Islam and scaring Muslims?

Is it Islamic to use chains and switchblade knives to attack students who are seeking knowledge and force them to leave their classes?

Is it Islamic to cheat in examinations, to presume upon professors, and to spread a climate of terror inside the universities?

Is it Islamic to steal from people and take their possessions from them by force? Is it Islamic to plan armed robbery operations against jewelry stores to finance the groups?

Is it Islamic to force one's way into mosques and desecrate the houses of worship? Is it? Is it?

I am not accusing these groups of any crimes by citing these examples. These are established facts and incidents, and they are on record in police files and in the prosecution's investigations. I only intended to show the extremist and violent method these groups are employing under the guise of Islam.

Like others, I wonder: If intentions are good, what would be the motive for employing such a method in an Islamic and a religious country like Egypt?

The head of state, President Mubarak spoke candidly when he said, "We are a country whose adherence to religion is greater than that of any other country. The Egyptian people are by nature devout people. No one is refusing to follow the precepts of the true religion or those of an enlightened course. No one is refusing to promote religious and moral values in society and among young people. But this is to be done without extremism and without conflict with the regime. It is to be done without destabilizing the country and without provoking violence."

Indeed, who would refuse the civilized application of Islam's precepts and laws? Who would refuse the application of laws which evolve with the spirit of the age and its requirements?

Islam does not mean that a Muslim is to become isolated in a cave. Islam involves more than just growing a beard and wearing a jellabah.

Islam does not mean that a Muslim is to close his mind and become inflexible about the ideas of our ancestors. It does not mean that he reject all other denominations and independent judgments and renounce the ruler, society and all those who oppose the ideas of the past. Nor does Islam mean that a Muslim use violence and terrorism to force his opinions and ideas on others.

Islam does not mean that a Muslim can enact any law he wishes to enact and contravene the regime and the law. It does not mean that he can use renunciation as a weapon against the ruler. Nor does it mean that he can permit offensive actions against Muslims or attacks on their values and morals.

There is nothing Islamic about threats, terrorism and rape. I will not elaborate, but I will set forth specific facts regarding this viewpoint.

1. Egypt is a country that takes its religion seriously. Egyptians of all faiths--Muslims and Christians--have been devout people for a very long time. The pharoahs during the age of Ikhnaton were the first to believe in one god. For decades and centuries Egypt has been the birthplace of religions and messages. It was in Sinai that God spoke to Moses on the mountain, and it was over Egyptian soil that the Virgin Mary traveled on her sacred journey. The Islamic conquest brought the True Religion to Egypt where 'Amr ibn al-'Ass called upon the people to embrace Islam and guaranteed the Copts safety.

Religions coexisted in Egypt in an atmosphere of tolerance and affection, and Muslims and Christians shed their blood in battles for liberation as they fought together to defend the homeland and turn back invaders and colonialist occupiers.

No country in the region or in the world has as many minarets and church towers in its skyline as Egypt does. There is no other capital city like Cairo, the city of a thousand and more minarets.

Thus, piety is a fundamental value in an Egyptian's makeup; he is convinced of that. An Egyptian's faith is a deep-seated faith that manifests itself without paroxysms or extremism.

2. Under Mubarak, the administration has devoted its attention to spreading the message and promoting religious values in society. It sees that as a basic introduction to teaching the new generations and instilling morals in them. When President Mubarak found that subsidies were required to promote Islam, he met those needs promptly. He did what the minister of religious trusts requested so that religious advocates could be dispatched to the mosques. President Mubarak issued an immediate decree appropriating 19 million dollars in the budget for that purpose.

3. The constitution guarantees freedom of religion and freedom of worship. There are no restrictions on religious rites. Nor is wearing a jellabah or a veil, for example, or growing a beard prohibited. In a climate of democracy and free speech the state does not reject enlightened Islamic ideas. In fact, it creates

the climate that would allow such enlightened ideas to become widespread. Sufficient evidence of that can be seen in religious programs on television and in radio--and that is not only during the month of Ramadan. The state's effort is also evident in how much space is devoted to enlightened ideas in the religious sections of newspapers.

4. Religious societies which are concentrating on the proper message of Islam and on education--such as the Society of Young Muslims, the Legal Society and others--are receiving every kind of aid and assistance from the government. They are doing their part to protect young people and steer society toward True Islam.

Then what is it that these groups want? What are they aiming at?

The leaders of these "Islamic" groups have set themselves up as guardians of Islamic missionary activity in accordance with their retrospective school of thought whose ideas are derived from those of Abu al-A'la al-Mawdudi. Al-Mawdudi had emerged in Pakistan, and his ideas had then spread to those of Sayyid Qutb--one of the Muslim Brothers' hard-line leaders--before his execution.

These groups were influenced by the violence of those ideas, and they wanted to impose themselves as guardians of Islamic missionary activity by using intellectual and physical terrorism. They wanted, for example to renounce and murder those who disagreed with them. This is what happened to al-Shaykh al-Dhahabi. They wanted to use such tactics to set up their plan to overthrow the government and apply the notion of "the rule of God."

They thought they could play the role of imams--or ayatollahs in the Shi'ite sect--as was the case in Iran after Khomeyni seized power. This is evident in the conduct of these groups' leaders. They employ an absolute dictatorship within the group, imposing their own law and requiring blind obedience from group members. In fact, they issue any decree they wish to issue in the name of Islam and they refuse to have any discussion of their orders.

With their violent and hard-line approach these groups thought they could test the government's strength. They thought that such a "test of strength" could occur in numerous places and be done in different ways.

In recent months the test of strength varied, coming as a direct clash with security forces on the streets, as was the case in Aswan; as a guarded confrontation with professors and students staged from behind the walls of universities, as was the case at Asyut University and at the Qasr al-'Ayni College of Medicine; as a confrontation in the courts; or as an attempt to stir up an outcry concerning the Bairam prayer in 'Abdin Square.

In all cases the test of strength by Muslim groups has focused on an attempt to explore and determine the government's reaction. Will it react to a decisive confrontation? Will it react to truce negotiations, or will it become lenient in the face of a wave of terrorism and religious violence?

Those who have been seeking leadership positions in these groups, like 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and Hafiz Salamat, thought they had the power in the name of

Islam to attract the sympathies of average Egyptians and to take advantage of their profound piety. That is why they concentrated on stirring up highly controversial issues so that Islamic groups could appear to be larger than they really are and thus gain even more supporters and sympathizers.

There was, for example, a demonstration that was organized by al-Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, the leader of al-Jihad Organization. That demonstration stormed Aswan Mosque by force under the pretext of delivering a religious lecture. The violence was such that the blockade which had been set up by central security forces was penetrated by cars. As a result, several soldiers were injured. From the outset that demonstration had a provocative and a challenging character that was intended to stir up the religious sentiments of the guileless and pious residents of Aswan.

Another example is a demonstration that was organized by Hafiz Salamat on behalf of a religious society, al-Hidayah al-Islamiyah [Islamic Guidance], to hold religious services on Bairam in 'Abdin Square. That society filed suit in court after the minister of the interior turned down its request to hold such services in a public square. The minister said his decision was made to preserve the peace and prevent the infiltration of troublemakers into the service. Such troublemakers could damage the service itself.

This then is intended by Islamic groups to be a test of the government's strength to determine, on the one hand, its ability to control the security situation and enforce the law. On the other hand, it is also a test of the Islamic groups' strength to control the streets and stir up controversial issues so as to appear to be greater and larger than they really are.

In both cases--so it seems to these groups--it was a test of strength and a way by means of which they could determine what their next step would be. Would they continue the wave of violence, or would they engage in truce negotiations, retreating temporarily until they could find an opportunity to strike the government and seize power in the name of Islam?

The aim then is political; the aim is to overthrow the government. Calling for the application of the canonical law of Islam is the Islamic groups' way of using religion to mislead and cover up the plan and the goal.

The Islamic groups' prevailing plan makes it seem that they think they have the power to apply pressure and exert influence so as to break through barriers and infiltrate the centers of power in universities, trade unions, political parties, and money and economic markets under the cover of religion. Consequently, they think that the road to their plan for an Islamic state will be a smooth one.

Islamic groups may find a model of what Islamic groups can do with opposition parties, which are trying to ride the wave of the religious movement, in the interim alliance experiment which was formed between the Wafd and the Muslim Brothers in the recent elections--12 Muslim Brothers are also members of the Wafd Party in the People's Assembly. Opposition parties can either form an alliance with these groups or allow proponents of the religious movement to

penetrate the party, as was the case with the Liberal Party and the Labor Party, even though the method and form of penetration may differ.

What is truly regrettable is the opportunism of small opposition parties, chief among which is the Wafd Party. These parties are taking advantage of the religious wave to gain popularity. As long as the Islamic wave is acceptable and popular, it would be all right to ride that wave. However, opposition parties do not realize that in riding that religious wave they become something like a Trojan Horse for these groups: nothing more than a means by which these groups can control political life. This is a more dangerous sign for them than it is for others, but opportunists in the parties do not see that and do not understand its objectives.

Speaking of the opportunism of political parties, let me cite an example of such opportunism and of the hypocrisy of Islamic groups.

Opposition newspapers have been deceptive in the controversy they created over 'Abbud al-Zumur, a convicted defendant in the case against al-Jihad Organization. After the incidents with the central security forces and in the aftermath of an attempt by two members of the al-Jihad Organization to escape from Turah Penitentiary, these newspapers started circulating rumors about the disappearance or murder of 'Abbud al-Zumur.

These partisan newspapers proceeded to push for press conferences to be held in al-Zumur's village so as to raise an outcry over his disappearance. In circulating the rumor they argued that he had not met with members of his family recently and that visits to him had been prohibited.

It seems obvious that such deliberate provocation with the rumor, before ascertaining that it is true, constitutes the opposition parties' attempts to outdo each other so as to win the affection and favor of Islamic groups.

The true reason why that rumor about 'Abbud al-Zumur was started was because he had refused to meet with his family and relatives. But why did he not want to meet with them?

Strict implementation of prison regulations had been somewhat relaxed with the al-Jihad Group Organization. Application of those regulations had been so relaxed with 'Abbud al-Zumur and his group that he used to write pamphlets on behalf of al-Jihad Organization and smuggle them out of prison with people who visited him. Those people would then print them and distribute the pamphlets outside prison.

When security agencies found out about these pamphlets, Zaki Badr, the minister of interior, ordered that regulations be applied to al-Zumur and his group just as they are applied to the remaining prisoners. Regulations were to be applied to them without strictness and without leniency. The prisoners are allowed to pray, to perform their rites and to exercise.

At first, 'Abbud al-Zumur issued a general order that was to apply to all prisoners who are members of al-Jihad Organization. He ordered them not to

accept visits for 2 weeks. That was intended to put pressure on the Ministry of the Interior. 'Abbud al-Zumur himself did in fact decline to see his family and relatives after regulations were being enforced in prison in a normal manner.

That was the truth behind the rumor of al-Zumur's disappearance. Can one say anything more than the truth?

These groups may see themselves as the prodigal son returning after an absence to inherit the role of the Muslim Brothers, whose status is still not legal. The Muslim Brothers Organization was disbanded, and its property was confiscated in 1954. But these groups have neither learned nor benefited from the lessons of what happened to the Muslim Brothers before and after the revolution after their secret organization turned to violence. That consequently led to counter-violence, and the Muslim Brothers Organization received successive blows and it was eventually liquidated.

Thus, Islamic groups are making the same mistake. They are adopting violence, and occasionally, they are seeking a deliberate clash with the government. They want to exacerbate the situation gradually over a long period of time, and they want to bring about change by overthrowing the government so that a chosen "elite" can assume power in the name of Islam. They would thus be comparable to those who raised "'Uthman's shirt" to achieve a specific objective.

In confusing religion and politics, the principal deception practiced by these groups and by the Muslim Brothers as well lies in their appeal for the application of Islamic law and their use of that appeal as a facade and a cover to achieve power.

Let us see what happened in Sudan, for example, when legal Islamic punishments were superficially and hastily applied under Numayri's administration. What was the result when religion was employed in politics? Bottles of liquor were thrown in the Nile as distilleries became widespread in people's homes, alcohol smuggling operations flourished, and buying and selling alcohol on the black market grew.

Two hundred and seventy-three Sudanese citizens had their hands amputated; foreigners were lashed; investors fled from Sudan; the economic crisis got worse; famine became more widespread; and the domestic situation exploded.

Let us look at Iran once again after the Islamic Republic or Khomeyni's Republic was established there. What has happened there, and where have the imams and their rule taken Iran?

They have depleted Iran's resources and drained its military strength. Iranian oil has become involved in an endless war with Iraq, and the Iranian treasury is on the verge of bankruptcy. The Iranian government cannot find the funds to finance development projects and provide food commodities.

People who received death sentences handed down by the Revolution's courts were executed en masse. According to statistics from Amnesty International 6,000 persons have been executed in Iran since Khomeyni came to power. British sources

assert, however, that about 15,000 persons were executed in the trials conducted by the bloody courts of Ayatollah Khalkhali. This is unprecedented in the history of Islam.

And here a question emerges: What about dialogue with these groups? Has it reached a dead end?

It cannot be said that the government has not made a continuous effort, nor can it be said that the government has not been patient, deliberate and tolerant in dealing with the phenomenon of religious extremism. The government has been patient, deliberate and tolerant over the years and after the storm of violence which Egypt experienced in the aftermath of the platform incident and al-Sadat's assassination.

No one can claim that the Mubarak administration did not try to lay the groundwork for a new beginning so that these groups can be restored to the old ways and shielded from violence and extremism. It tried to do that by pursuing enlightened dialogue with the groups inside the prisons--including al-Jihad Organization--and by maintaining direct contact with their leaders.

But to no avail. These groups wrongly believed that dialogue could be the result of weakness in the regime's grip. They thought the government's wish to pursue dialogue could be the result of its wish to enter into truce negotiations with the groups until such a time when it can attack them--this was what happened with the Muslim Brothers under 'Abd-al-Nasir's administration. But this is something that political leaders are not contemplating at all in a climate of freedom and democracy.

However, when matters go so far that people are attacked and beaten up in universities--as was the case in Asyut; that offenses are committed against people's beliefs; and that the personal security of students is threatened with switchblade knives and chains, then decisive intervention by the government is required to put an end to this chaotic wave of violence that is being perpetrated in the name of religion.

When matters get to the point that the dean of the College of Medicine, Dr Hashim Fu'ad, is attacked and insulted; when professors are presumed upon; and when the crisis of the veil is contrived to stir up feelings and emotions against the system in the college, then firm opposition and the application of regulations are required.

A firm stance backed by the law had to be taken with these groups which are trying to seem bigger and larger than they really are. The violence and the infringement on law and order and security had to be brought to an end so that those seeking leadership positions, like 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and Hafiz Salamah, would not go too far in manipulating and using religion at the expense of True Islam.

But I find myself faced with a specific question: What is behind these groups and who is behind the plan for religious violence?

There is no doubt that there are outside forces which do not want Egypt to become stable. In fact, there are Arab regimes that find the prevailing climate of freedom and democracy in Egypt threatening because it could become contagious.

That is why these outside forces are striving to stir up civil strife and create disturbances. They are trying to take advantage of the prevailing Islamic tide in the region, and they are trying to direct it toward violence in Egypt. Therefore, they do not hesitate to help religious extremist groups and to finance them if necessary so they can grow, destabilize the country and disturb the peace.

I do not wish to generalize regarding Islamic groups, but I am observing the phenomena that are occurring around us and spreading and affecting the country.

There is a major difference as well as a dividing line between piety and extremism, between promoting the message of Islam and renunciation, and between Islam and violence.

There is a dividing line--like black and white--between those who wish to advance the cause of God for God's sake and those who come out of a cave under the banner of religion to gain power.

Interior Minister's Viewpoint

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 18 Jun 86 p 6

[Interview with Zaki Badr, Minister of the Interior by Muhammad Wajdi Qandil: "The Minister of the Interior's Viewpoint on Extremist Groups and the Boundaries of Security: 'Anyone Who Breaks the Law Will Be Dealt with by the Law';" date and place of interview not specified]

[Text] In a candid interview with Maj Gen Zaki Badr, minister of the interior, about manifestations of extremism and religious violence, questions were raised about Islamic groups from a security standpoint. Was the issue of Islamic groups a religious or a political issue?

[Answer] It is most definitely and most certainly not a religious issue. These are religious matters, like the application of the canonical law of Islam. These groups are using these matters to create a wave of violence, terrorizing people intellectually and physically to achieve specific political objectives.

Facts in that regard and evidence of that are numerous and well-established. Religion has never said that a son could strike his father, that a student could attack his professor, strike his fellow student and intimidate his female colleague. Violence is not part of the tolerant nature of Islam. "Call men to the path of your Lord with wisdom and kindly exhortation" [al-Nahl: 125]. That is why the actions taken by these Islamic groups do not express the essence of religion, but rather constitute an attempt to impose their views by using intellectual terrorism disguised as religion.

[Question] Why is this phenomenon of violence growing in Asyut and in universities in particular? And why is religious extremism on the rise?

[Answer] It is the method they use to terrorize others that makes these groups appear larger than they really are. For example, we find that these Islamic groups have 100 students scattered in different colleges, but they are using violence and intimidation to control thousands of their colleagues who come to the university to study and learn and who have no time for clashing with these groups. They are always trying to be more vociferous than others and to have a more violent grip than others so as to scare them. Thus, they would be heard in universities and in the elections of students' unions.

It is true: discipline in the universities is a must, and regulations and laws must be enforced so that a real academic spirit can prevail and those who want to learn can have that opportunity. But those who do not wish to learn should not have an opportunity to stir up violence and create chaos.

[Interviewer's comments] We talked about the attacks that happened in Aswan, the desecration of the mosque and the disturbances that were created under religious slogans because of a lecture by al-Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman. Was this a test of strength or was it an operation intended to provoke a clash?

[Answer] Can you imagine that the violence went so far that the force which had set up a blockade around the place to preserve the peace was stormed by automobiles? Some people were injured. This is an indication of the violent method these groups are using to achieve their objectives. This cannot be for the sake of religion.

[Question] And here we come to the question: How can these groups be confronted? Does one talk with them or use the power of the law against them? What are the boundaries of security?

[Answer] It is my opinion that we have to talk. But with whom do we talk? We could talk with those who agree to talk, but these people are refusing to talk.

We have to have a public confrontation to expose them and reveal their intentions. We have to do that through the media and through those people who advocate the cause of Islam in mosques. Young people would thus become aware, and they would be exposed to the truth about extremist allegations that are made in the name of Islam. We have to do this to make people know the proper affairs of religion.

But we can't get anywhere with these groups which use violence unless we confront them with violence. Security measures which are to be taken with them have to be based on the power of the law because their objective is political and not religious.

Let me say this publicly and without equivocation: We will use the law and we will be firm with anyone who breaks the law and disrupts security. We will not be lax with those who break the law.

[Question] What is the evaluation of the dialogue which took place with members of al-Jihad Organization and other groups inside prisons? Has that dialogue produced positive results in the thinking of some of these people, if not all of them, and were they persuaded by the dialogue?

[Answer] I can say that the experience did have results. Those who had been duped and who had not been persuaded by the violent method changed their extremist way of thinking and came to their senses. They found out the truth and stayed away from these groups.

Some of them had actually been duped, and pressure had been applied to some of them. No one who comes under the control of these groups can extricate himself easily from them. Leaders of the group who fear their secrets and the secrets of their organizations may be revealed threaten those who try to leave the group. That is why they use pressure and threats to force members to stay in the organization.

However, one cannot talk with the rest. When I was in Asyut, I tried over a period of 4 years to talk with them, but I did not get anywhere with them. In my experience they used to refuse to talk, and they did not get involved in a dialogue. This is because when one cites the Koran, the prophetic tradition and the correct religion in talking to them, they are quickly exposed and their extremist allegations are refuted. The fact that they have another objective also becomes evident. And that is something they do not want so they can continue carrying out their plan and taking advantage of young people and of the faith.

Suffice it to say that their actions have nothing to do with Islam. They cheat in examinations, for example; they violate rules that Muslims consider inviolable; they steal; and they carry out armed robbery attempts against jewelry stores to finance their groups. They attempted such an armed robbery operation in the town of Sanad Bast in Mit Ghamr and in al-Minya before 1981, justifying this to themselves by claiming that "Necessity legitimizes that which is proscribed."

It is up to us to ask them in what religion and under what law do theft and burglary become necessary?

From the Groups' Files

These are examples of the extraordinary incidents perpetrated by members of these groups and recorded in police reports and the prosecution's investigations. They have nothing to do with religious precepts and Islamic values, and they represent morals that depart from and break with traditions. These incidents include:

--In Port Said one member of these groups raped his wife's sisters. The incident was investigated by the prosecutor's office.

--The leader of a group in al-Fayyum renounced his brother for enlisting in the armed forces and declared his brother's wife fair game. A report of the incident was filed.

--Group leaders, especially leaders of the Renunciation and Repudiation Society, declared the wives of group members divorced from their husbands and married them off to others against their wishes and without their approval.

--One member of al-Jihad Organization stole a gold chain from a girl as she walked in a public street. A report of that incident was filed.

--Attempts to cheat during examinations were found out. It was claimed that cheating was not forbidden.

Judge's Viewpoint on Violence

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 18 Jun 86 p 7

[Interview with Justice Sa'id 'Ashmawi, chief judge of the State Security Court by Usamah 'Ajjaj: "The Dialogue on Extremist Groups Continues: No Provisions in Egyptian Laws Violate the Canonical Laws of Islam; Judge Sa'id 'Ashmawi: 'The Groups Are Confusing Religion and Politics To Achieve Power';" date and place of interview not specified]

[Text] Reactions to AKHIR SA'AH's coverage of extremist groups have been coming in. Since this is a subject open for discussion, the dialogue on these groups and what they hope to gain from religious violence continues. What do they want, and what are they seeking? Justice Muhammad Sa'id 'Ashmawi, chief judge of the State Security Court, joins in the dialogue after he was targeted for assassination by these groups because of a book he published some time ago about these Islamic groups and who they really are. Justice 'Ashmawi is neutral in this matter: he is a man who studied legislation and Islamic jurisprudence, and he has been involved in the judicial system for 30 years. Justice 'Ashmawi thinks that extremist groups and the Muslim Brothers have the same objectives: they want to confuse religion and politics, and they are striving to seize power. He states that Egyptian law has no provisions that violate the canonical laws of Islam. He also states that extremist groups reject any dialogue because they know that they would lose in such a dialogue.

[Question] Let's say first that opinions on the true relationship between Islamic groups and the Muslim Brothers have differed. Some have affirmed there are differences between them, and others have indicated there was a strong relationship between them and a good distribution of roles. What do you have to say about this matter?

[Answer] In my judgment there are no differences between the factions of the Islamic Movement--be these factions the groups or the Muslim Brothers. All these factions are founded on the same ideas: overthrowing the government and establishing a so-called Islamic government which would be called the caliphate. They want to tear down the legal and judicial systems and establish in their place an alternate system that differs from the existing system only in the language used. The intent of such a system is to give those who call themselves religious scholars control over the legal and legislative systems. They reject any dialogue, claiming it to be either useless or condescending to society. But in fact they fear any dialogue because their leaders do not have the required level of learning for participation in such a dialogue. Although some of them do have

more learning than that, they exploit their knowledge, maintaining and arguing positions which they know for certain to be not true. They earn gold and silver by doing that and by going along with what are meaningless words.

[Question] But the Muslim Brothers are striving to gain legitimacy either by joining existing parties or by going to court to restore their group. They are also thinking of establishing a party. At the same time extremist groups are refusing to pursue that.

[Answer] Generally speaking, that is not true because all these tendencies are against the legitimacy bestowed on them by society. They turn to violence one time under the slogan of "fighting for the cause of God" and another time under that of "forbidding evil." They give themselves the right to put any ruler, thinker, or judge on trial, to pronounce a death sentence against him and to carry it out.

In its last issue AKHIR SA'AH published a statement made by an old school advocate of that tendency. He stated that they had killed no one but al-Nuqrashi and Justice al-Khazindar. These two were killed because the former had betrayed the cause and the latter had handed down maximum sentences against a few young people. Is there any more evidence needed that violence, terrorism and assassination are the methods employed by this tendency and are intrinsic to its actions? If a certain tendency were attempting to resist legal and social laws and threatening the security of rulers, judges and thinkers, would it have the right to complain when society fights it with the same method or inflicts upon it the punishment it deserves? The maximum legal punishment does apply to these people even though I think that such a punishment cannot be applied at the present time because the conditions for application are difficult. According to legal and social laws these people are corrupting the land and threatening the security of society.

[Question] But the Muslim Brothers are asserting that they have irrevocably renounced violence. Such an assertion affirms that they have altered the nature of their actions.

[Answer] A quick look at what extremist groups are doing now in universities shows one that these groups' actions are the same actions that were carried out by Muslim Brothers in the early fifties. I saw them attack all those who opposed them with whips and iron bars. History is repeating itself. This is the road that this tendency never departs from: the mentally deficient practice more violence, and the heartless engage in more heavy-handedness.

But if the old tendency is affirming that it is no longer engaged in violent practices and that it wishes to become involved in political life, then this tendency is being somewhat deceptive. In Islamic terms, this is called dissimulation of one's religion under duress, or concealing what one cannot show or proclaim. In addition, most of these people are merchants, currency dealers and entrepreneurs who manage projects in a manner that violates the law and economic principles. Their interests are served when the government looks the other way. They can thus increase their fortune and show their true colors! I found out that this tendency used to buy four pages in an opposition newspaper to publish articles which purported to be religious articles when in fact they were paid for advertisements.

[Question] I heard that you had a significant experience with the Islamic groups and that you have been targeted for assassination by them. Can you tell us about this experience?

[Answer] When I published my book, "Usul al-Shari'ah" [Principles of the Canonical Law of Islam], a few people proposed that it be published in one of the dailies. After the book was published, I was stunned by the extraordinary attacks which appeared as of July 1979 in all newspapers published by the hard-line groups. They were misrepresenting my point of view, claiming that I made statements I did not make and then responding to those statements themselves because they were contemptuous of the readers' mental abilities. At that time the minister of religious trusts expressed his opposition to me in an article, which he later said he had written to please a few religious groups. He was in fact seeking to gain the religious tendency's favor in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution in the hope that he would become a "new Khomeyni." When I replied [to his attack], he issued a formal legal opinion declaring me a target for assassination. The legal opinion was published by AL-DA'WAH Magazine. The late Salih 'Ashmawi wrote an article calling upon his followers and every Muslim to get me! So I wrote a letter about that to President al-Sadat, and that was one of the reasons why the minister of religious trusts was removed from his position in the first cabinet shuffle. I received protection around the clock, even during court sessions. That illustrates the terrorist method which is pursued by both the old and the modern religious tendency.

Existing tendencies which are wrangling with Islam are not one and the same, even though they share the same ignorance and the same violent nature. If any tendency should gain the government's recognition or take part in the administration, those who oppose it will be involved in blood baths in the name of religion. Existing tendencies can now be divided into two. One of them is that of Arab Islamic nationalism, and the other is that of Iranian Islamic nationalism. In Egypt there is a monthly publication which is always advocating Persian nationalism and expressing its contempt and disdain for Arab nationalism. This confirms the political nature of these tendencies. However, the grave danger from these tendencies lies in the possibility that Egypt's character and history and the loyalty it commands may get lost in the midst of what is being said about loyalty to Islam, which is in fact nothing but loyalty to the centers of money and influence outside Egypt or to the branches those centers have in Egypt.

[Question] But the Muslim Brothers are indicating that gaining legal status would be enough to resolve the question of terrorist groups.

[Answer] That too is not true because anyone who wishes to become involved in politics should do so in accordance with existing laws. This means that he is not to demand that existing laws be amended and shaped in a certain manner to allow him to become active in politics. There are no parties that are based on religion because it was the legislator's intent to protect national unity and prevent the establishment of religious parties. Legislators wanted to prevent the creation of scores of religious parties which would fight each other in the name of religion. Some of them would renounce others, and Egypt would turn into

a battlefield like Lebanon. This is what anti-Islamic and anti-Egyptian forces want. It is peculiar that national newspapers would publish an article by one of their writers expressing a well-known logical and legal contradiction. That author stated that those who were not with and of them were not Muslims. Such an expression is in and of itself divisive, breaking national unity not only between Muslims and Copts, but also between Muslims and Muslims because, according to this statement, members of these extremist groups were Muslims but others were not. In the view of these tendencies those people [that is, those who are not affiliated with these tendencies] will be more hostile and more dangerous than the adherents of a revealed religion.

[Question] Where does the religious tendency's problem lie? Does it lie in their confusing religion with politics or in their call for the application of the canonical law of Islam?

[Answer] I believe that the root of the problem lies in the religious tendency's use of advertising: they promote themselves in a manner that is closer to that of advertising goods. They rely on catchy phrases, empty words, meaningless expressions or faulty formulations which they repeat day and night. That is why they refuse to become involved in any quiet dialogue or scientific discussion because they realize the outcome in advance. In this matter they follow their leader, Abu al-A'la al-Mawdudi because of their need to condescend to societies and look down on participation in lawful, constitutional and legal institutions. Al-Mawdudi made that statement as a result of his feelings of severe inferiority in the face of British colonialism and the opinions of world civilization. Since 1979 a few reasonable people have tried repeatedly to convince proponents of that tendency that their slogans were unrealistic, false and misleading. But they refused to recognize that so as not to destroy their attempts to promote their ideas. That is why they proclaim the slogan of applying the canonical law of Islam.

[Question] But they are claiming that Egyptian law is originally French, and they say that is why they are calling for the application of Islamic law.

[Answer] And that too is an obvious fraud. When the question is presented in this manner to an ordinary Muslim who is asked, "Do you accept the law of God or the French law," the answer is known. Islamic groups do not talk about what is meant by the canonical law of Islam. They do not talk about the difference between the canonical law of Islam and Egyptian law. They do not talk about who enforces the law. Does God Himself enforce the law, or is the law enforced by humans? These groups misinterpret the law, and their interpretations misconstrue the law. Their enforcement of the laws is severe, and they claim that what they say is God's word and what they do is God's will.

[Question] And what about the question of the canonical law of Islam which is the focus of all extremist groups' activities?

[Answer] On the basis of a slow, unhurried study of Egyptian law and the canonical law of Islam, I can affirm that all Egyptian laws conform to the canonical law of Islam, both with regard to the provisions that are mentioned in the Holy Koran or those that are appropriate from an Islamic standpoint. To put it very briefly the provisions that are mentioned in the Koran about personal

affairs, like marriage, divorce, inheritance, and wills are identical to those in Egyptian laws. When these laws were drafted, a few theologians' opinions were taken into consideration. These opinions were seen by legislators to be suitable to the conditions of the age. There is only one rule on religious matters mentioned in the Koran: God made selling permissible and forbade usury. However, the Koran did not define selling and did not define usury. Theologians defined those terms in accordance with the conditions of their ages. But they were divided into hard-liners on one side, and permissive legislators on the other. On procedural matters, however, the Koran says nothing except that debt agreements should be recorded and documented. In criminal matters there are only four penalties mentioned in the Koran: those for theft, libel, adultery and highway robbery. The punishment for apostasy was mentioned in two traditions of the prophet. The so-called punishment for consuming alcohol is one that may be forgiven because it is imposed by the state and mentioned neither in the Koran nor in the prophetic tradition. These penalties are provisional and may only be applied after political, social and judicial justice is achieved and a society of the faithful is established. Thus legal judgments would not be used for unlawful purposes intended by the ruler or sought by an administration, as was the case in Sudan.

These punishments do not cover all other crimes such as bribery, embezzlement of public funds, appropriation of state funds, and accepting commissions and brokerage fees. These crimes are most dangerous, but they do not include crimes of espionage, forging documents, forging checks, arson, rape, and adultery. Nor do they include crimes that have to do with narcotics, food supply and traffic. Theologians came up with what is called a system of "justifications." This means that those who are in power--and this is now the legislative assembly--have the right to declare any deed they find dangerous to the security of society a crime. They have the right to establish appropriate penalties for those deeds, and that may even include execution. Thus, all such sentences would be consistent with the canonical law of Islam and the spirit of the Koran because the conditions that ought to be achieved before such legal punishments are determined and enforced have not been achieved. In addition, it was not the Great Legislator's intention to shed any blood, handicap anyone or amputate anyone's limb, but it was His intention that society establish political, social and judicial justice.

Discussion of Religious Extremism Continued

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic 9 Jul 86 pp 10-11

[Interviews with al-Shaykh 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Nimr, Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar 'Aziz, Dr 'Abd-al-Jalil Shalabi and the Great Imam al-Shaykh Jad al-Haqq by Hasan 'Allam: "AKHIR SA'AH resumes Its Interviews with Muslim Scholars;" date and place of interviews not specified]

[Text] Al-Shaykh 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Nimr: "Detention camps are the reason; the groups are taking advantage of the economic crisis."

Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar 'Aziz: "The groups have no programs, and dialogue is the only remedy for intransigence."

Dr 'Abd-al-Jalil Shalabi: "Secrecy leads to the corruption of the groups, and young people need guidance."

The Great Imam al-Shaykh Jad al-Haqq: "Al-Azhar is not out of the picture."

The issue of Islamic groups and religious extremism is one that has its implications and underlying causes; it also has a body of old grounds and previous hidden sequels.

AKHIR SA'AH resumes its discussion of this important and vital subject which is on many people's minds, particularly those of our young people who find themselves bewildered by the obfuscation of extremism. AKHIR SA'AH meets with Muslim scholars in an objective discussion to put on record the enlightened opinion on the call to promote Islam which is based on wisdom and kindly exhortation. It is an opinion that rejects violent and terrorist methods and the renunciation of one Muslim by a fellow Muslim.

Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar 'Aziz has joined the dialogue and discussion group. He thinks that leaders of these groups have personal interests and may have support from abroad. He also reveals the secret behind the fact that large numbers of these groups' members joined a few political parties despite their previous repudiation of these parties.

Dr 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Nimr thinks that these groups are taking advantage of the general hard times and the economic crisis in the country to stir up discontent in people's hearts.

The Muslim scholar Dr 'Abd-al-Jalil Shalabi warns against secrecy in forming societies. He says these young people need someone to curb their enthusiasm and set them on the right course.

His Eminence the Great Imam, the Shaykh of al-Azhar comments on the opinions of those scholars and proclaims al-Azhar's role in the face of such extremism. The shaykh of al-Azhar talks about what these groups think is the ideal method to promote the cause of Islam.

We started with Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar 'Aziz, professor and head of the Department of Islamic Missionary Activity at al-Azhar University. Dr 'Aziz is a member of the People's Assembly and chairman of the Religious Committee of the Wafd party. He spoke for the record about how his dealings with religious groups began, and he talked about his evaluation of their ideas. "I came to know large numbers of these groups' members in the course of my dealings with Islamic groups since 1981 when I took part in the meetings that were held with them in penitentiaries and prisons. It became evident to me that each one of these groups had its own ideas, and that these ideas sometimes differed from those of other groups. However, all of them agreed that application of the canonical law of Islam was necessary.

"Some of these groups, however, particularly the hardliners, think there are specific methods for achieving that. To mention only a few examples, some of them do not believe in the concept of elections; others do not believe in the

existence and organization of political parties; and still others call for a succession to power. But they do not know exactly how this succession to power can be achieved.

"Most of these young people did not major in any field of study, and their concept of Islam is neither general nor comprehensive. That is why I can say candidly after all this that in the course of these meetings which were held with them in prisons many of them indicated that they had been misled and that the dialogue with them had yielded good and significant results."

Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar 'Aziz says, "At first, the dialogue which took place with these groups was spontaneous, and it dealt with conflicting ideas. These groups included followers of Sayyid Qutb, al-Samawi, and al-Faramawi. They included those who subscribe to the ideas of al-Jihad Organization and the Society of Renunciation and Repudiation as well as those who believe in specific ideas but are not affiliated with a specific group. Those people just call themselves Salafis. That dialogue whose purpose was to change the ideas of most of these young people was easy, but the problem was with their hardline leaders. It turned out they had a personal stake in the matter. In fact, they may have even had support from abroad.

"Each one of these teams or groups thinks that it alone is right. A few people with sick minds or ulterior motives took advantage of young people's spiritual void and set themselves up as imams and leaders of these groups. They also took advantage of young people's passion and their rejectionist stance. Thus, the normal reaction for them was to assume a hardline stance and go to extremes, thinking that extremism would be the only means for saving the nation from this ruin, corruption and dissolution.

"It was the improper manner with which these groups were dealt that hardened their hardline stance even further. It increased their numbers and made them more adamant about their principles and appeals, some of which may not be based on proper evidence. The emotional circumstances and reactions of these enthusiastic young people were not taken into account, and they became convinced that fighting against the government and changing the regime under what they called "applying the canonical law of Islam" was a manifestation of their faith and a step that would bring them closer to God. They became convinced that sacrificing themselves, their fortunes and their future was also an effort made for the cause of God. And that is how we got to be where we are now.

"The government is watching and waiting. It is ready to respond to the measures that are taken by these young people to show their positions and beliefs which have become to them a matter of doctrine which they teach each other."

Dr 'Abd-al-Ghaffar 'Aziz says, "It is known that most of the followers of Islamic groups reject the notion of joining political parties. They think that these parties are heresy and they think elections are unlawful. Nevertheless, there is a new indicator as large numbers of these groups and their leaders join the Liberal party. That is why this party, in particular, has the largest number of members of Islamic groups."

[Question] How did this happen, and how do you personally explain the fact that these groups have joined a political party?

[Answer] It was explained to them that current conditions made it necessary that they join a political party so they can get to the legislative assembly and apply the canonical law of Islam.

When Islamic groups join politicians, when they talk with them, and when they are given the responsibility and task of taking care of party business and other matters, they will no doubt change many of their ideas which they had previously espoused.

There are clear examples of that in front of us. Al-Shaykh Yusuf al-Badri joined a political party--he is now vice president of the Liberal party. This man is one of those people who had announced more than once that he would not join political parties. He declared that elections were illegal from his point of view, and he rejected all existing conditions. He announced all that in newspapers, and these newspapers responded to him. But he has now ignored all that, now that he has become vice president of the Liberal party.

Another example is 'Abdallah al-Samawi, a leader of one of the ultra hardline groups who has his own ideas about joining the Liberal Party. And there are the followers of Sayyid Qutb who joined the same party.

Personally, I am worried about the Liberal Party because of the proliferation of these religious groups in it. A large number of these groups in the party could lead to conflict and disputes.

[Question] After all this, how can these groups be dealt with during the current period?

The Groups Have No Defined Programs

[Answer] I believe that using violence and force to deal with this issue will complicate the matter further. The consequences for society will not be useful. A few circumstances which recently appeared in this society have helped create sympathy for these young people, encouraging them in their hardline positions toward the government. But these extremists don't know what will happen as a result of changing the existing regime. Nor do they know the truth about what is being said about applying the canonical law of Islam. They don't know what is actually required in this application. But all of them, consciously and unconsciously, are repeating that demand and even insisting on it simply out of a desire to change.

I go along with those people who say that these groups do not have specific solutions for dealing with problems and current conditions because their social circumstances and the fact that they do not have official recognition from the state has meant that they have not devoted all their efforts to drafting a social, political and economic program with which they can help solve problems. That is why I go along with those people who think it is necessary that a political party be established for these Islamic groups.

It is very normal for these groups not to have such a specific program now. They think they are still starting out and that what is required of them now is merely to make people believe in the idea of applying the Islamic system, since it is the basis and foundation of what they are calling for. Afterwards, they would look into particulars, and they would draft programs for implementing these particulars. They think that is what the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him salvation, did in the early days of Islam when he concentrated at first on making people believe in the idea of worshiping one God and spurning the worship of idols and statues. He concentrated on the foundation of this message and the essence of this religion. Afterwards, after the community was formed, the Prophet began setting forth the detailed program for the organization of an Islamic society. This society would be organized on the basis of this comprehensive program which covered all the particulars and details of life and included all aspects of political, social and economic life. It is a clearly defined program which is based on provisions that are related to the texts.

It would be wrong to accuse these young people of terrorism and to deal with them on that basis to preserve the security of the state and of citizens. This would cause young people to harden their positions and insist on their beliefs, most of which may be erroneous beliefs and incorrect notions. We have never found such a method to be successful, not even with worldwide terrorist organizations like the Red Brigades in Italy or the Red Army in Japan.

We started having a sense of the ideas that are held by writers who represent tendencies opposed to an Islamic system. We started reading articles by Justice Sa'id 'Ashmawi, by Dr Wahid Ra'fat, Dr Fu'ad Zakariya, by other proponents of secularism and by communists.

I found Justice Sa'id 'Ashmawi declaring that there were no provisions in Egyptian laws which violated the canonical law of Islam even though officials in Egypt acknowledge that numerous provisions in Egyptian laws that violate the canonical law of Islam do exist. That was why the state made an official announcement in the name of the People's Assembly that something would be done to purge the laws from anything that violates the canonical law of Islam.

I still think that free, open and unconditional dialogue is the only way a hard-line stance in religion can be dealt with. Scholars are to be allowed to present their ideas and opinions freely. No one should dictate to them what they are to say; nor should they be forced or intimidated to say anything. I am also personally willing to talk with Justice Sa'id 'Ashmawi about his peculiar beliefs.

Detention Camps Are the Culprit

Dr 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Nimr, former minister of religious trusts, took part in the dialogue. He thinks that detention camps during 'Abd-al-Nasir's administration are the cause of religious extremism. Within the ranks of the Muslim Brothers there were those who were horrified by the fact that they had been tortured by government employees. That led them to believe that a government whose employees would carry out such torture could not be an Islamic government. It had to be a government that did not believe in God. Those people formed their own group of individuals who subscribed to that view. As a result of that view it was

necessary to fight this government of non-believers and all those who assisted it. They did not listen to the moderate opinion within the ranks of the Muslim Brothers; nor did they listen to the opinion of the Muslim Brothers' grand master, the late Hasan al-Hudaybi. Those who believed the government was not an Islamic government renounced al-Hudaybi and all those who shared his opinion, and they accused him and those who shared his views of helping the government while they were being held in detention camp.

Those people left the detention camps, promoting their opinions and forming their own undeclared community. They proceeded to gather evidence that the government did not believe in God; that dealing with it was forbidden; and that it had to be fought. Some of those people preferred to keep a low profile and not to declare their violence publicly. All of them, however, found evidence which helped their idea grow, and they found causes they could rely on.

--Their first argument was that the government was governing by rules other than those ordained by God. "Unbelievers are those who do not judge in accordance with Allah's revelations" [al-Ma'idah: 44].

That is why the first thing in their opinion which helped them in the face of the masses was their demand that the canonical law of Islam be applied and used in rendering judgments. The people responded to their demand, but they did not share their opinion of the government.

--A few media agencies sometimes went beyond the requirements of the fact that we are an Islamic nation whose media should adhere to and observe Islamic morals. They took advantage of that to strengthen their point of view with the masses who responded to them.

--Their point of view against the government was furthered by current behavior which is approved by the state even though it violates Islamic morals and precepts, such as night clubs. There was some response to them from the people.

--They picked up manifestations of support for them: a conference would be held, for example, at the time of the Friday noon prayer, or there would be any such show of support.

--They have been taking advantage of the general poverty in the country and stirring up discontent in people's hearts. They have been telling people that following and applying the canonical law of Islam would put an end to all their suffering. The people have been responding to them and sympathizing with them, or they are at least assuming a passive position toward them, not blaming them for anything.

Dr 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Nimr thinks that this can be dealt with by having the state proclaim and adopt religion and religious morals and ethics. The state is to do what it can to get rid of everything that violates these morals and ethics, even if it has to do so gradually. The state is to make that its fourth principle and it is to add it to the three principles of socialism, unity and social peace. Thus, no one would dare commit offenses against religion and religious morals and ethics, just as they do not dare now do anything against the three principles. The state should find no difficulty in making such an announcement

because it is a constitutional necessity that the canonical law of Islam become the foundation of legislation and that religion and morals become the foundation of the family.

--Official agencies promptly announced that they would try to purge our laws from anything that violated the canonical law of Islam. There is a general feeling among the people that this aspect is being ignored, and that is making people, especially those people, angry. It is also strengthening their argument. That is why it is necessary that special committees be formed and that these committees publish the result of their study as soon as possible. At any rate purging the laws is easy.

--The state is to try to curb religious and moral infractions which take place in nightclubs and other such places where religion, morals and the agents that make up and form a nation are toyed with.

--The government is to do something concrete to make the people feel that it is serious about getting rid of those things which people are complaining about. Officials are not to issue statements that prices will not be raised even as the state's public sector does raise prices while salaries remain unchanged. The present cabinet started taking that into account.

--Religious guidance counselors who serve as scholars in mosques and elsewhere are to deal with our existing problems. They are to critique them and suggest ways for bringing about change or dealing with these problems. This is to be done in an atmosphere of freedom that is unencumbered by observation or terrorism.

--The state is to assume a practical, firm position on enforcing the accountability law so that we can see the rapid effects of such enforcement.

Marxists' Role in Helping Islamic Groups Stir Up Discontent among the Classes

Marxists and Islam

We have to look into the freedom which has been afforded the Marxists in the media, and we have to look into the freedom they have been given to promote their ideology and attempt to abort every action taken by the state. Marxists basically do not recognize religions as a principle, nor do they recognize religious precepts. Thus, they are naturally against the state's and the constitution's tendency. It was wrong to give them what they were given. We and the state are now reaping the consequences of that mistake. It is unconstitutional and religiously impermissible to give freedom to a party founded on the principle of destroying religious freedom, a party working for the interests and ideas of an outside power. A political party that is striving to bring about a bloody coup by turning the classes against each other so that the proletariat may come to power should not be given freedom. Such people take what is sound and turn it into a mistake; they make mistakes worse; and they try to distort the state's image, to embarrass it and to help its enemies. This is always evident in their propaganda. They fight every partial reform because in their opinion reform reduces discontent, and they want discontent to grow so that they can use it to bring about the Marxist Revolution.

This intellectual extremism which constitutes a serious case of perversion has its effect on the religious groups' view because it is these groups that resort to stirring discontent among the classes by taking advantage of every shortcoming or malfunction and making it larger than it really is. They are assisted by Marxist funds and by the influence of foreign Marxist forces. I think the government is being lenient with them, using freedom of opinion as its argument, but the government is not equally lenient with religious groups even though there is enough outside evidence to justify a firm position on the government's part. Citizens find nothing more hurtful than those who oppose their religion. That is why the danger posed by such people is not less than that which is perceived to be the danger posed by extremist religious groups. In fact, the danger they pose is greater than that posed by those groups who destroy religion and morals, break up ties among people and create discontent in their midst. The national press must follow up on the deception perpetrated by these people, and it must expose them on a regular basis.

Secrecy Leads to Corruption

The Muslim thinker Dr 'Abd-al-Jalil Shalabi, former secretary general of the Academy of Islamic Research says, "The secrecy that is sometimes observed in organizing groups leads to corruption because young people are rebellious by nature. They are impetuous, and they need someone to curb their enthusiasm and give them proper direction. When there is secrecy, there are no guidance counselors who can provide proper guidance. All the more reason why the government should look over the shoulders of those who are vocal and outspoken and tell them, 'This is wrong; this is right; and that is no good.' Extremism would then decrease, and Islamic missionary work would continue. God Almighty created every person, showing him two ways. One of these ways was identified as the righteous way and the other as the evil way. Man was then left alone to choose. If we were to leave man alone, he would be swayed by his instinct and his environment and he would choose the evil way when we need to have him choose the righteous way. The danger of extremism lies in the fact that extremists sometimes come up with formal legal opinions and views which have nothing to do with Islamic judgments. Sometimes they set themselves up as rulers of society. They may be seeking truths and proper things, but they can only be rulers if they are appointed. But since they are individuals, it would be more appropriate for them to devote their activity to providing guidance to young people who, except for those who are guarded by God, are always influenced by their baser instincts, their vigor and their leisure to seek satisfaction for their physical needs more than their emotional and spiritual needs. If young people were to find those who would guide them to do what is right by their religion and their God, they would go in that direction too."

The human spirit may sometimes heal and elevate itself so as to turn a human being into an angel-like creature. Sometimes, however, the human spirit debases itself and becomes vile, turning that human being into something that is worse than a savage beast. A beast devours his prey when he is hungry, but a corrupt, savage human being conjures up ways for committing crimes. He is insatiable.

The Great Imam Speaks

[Question] But what is al-Azhar doing in the face of such extremism? What does His Eminence the Great Imam say about dealing with such extremism and the ideal method for promoting the message of Islam?

His Eminence, the Great Imam al-Shaykh Jad-al-Haqq 'Ali Jad-al-Haqq says, "Al-Azhar has never been out of the picture. In fact, it is the extremists and those who are in charge of their affairs who have been out of the picture. Those people did not enroll in al-Azhar to learn. Al-Azhar is an institution whose doors are open, not closed. Leaders of these groups warned their followers against contacting scholars, not because they have no confidence in them, as they claim, but because they fear for their opinions. No scholar from al-Azhar has ever refused any request that had anything to do with religion. Al-Azhar's scholars answer any questions that are posed to them; they hold seminars; they witness religious celebrations and they participate in them and make significant contributions to them. Al-Azhar's scholars have never haggled over religious lessons, nor have they held back their knowledge for worldly gain despite the meager rewards that are lawfully appropriated for their efforts. Al-Azhar's scholars are rewarded by God. They keep in mind what the Prophet, may God bless him and grant him salvation, said, 'The best among you are those who learn and teach the Koran.'

"The Prophet said, 'Learn something, Abu Dhirr, whether you use it or not. Learning is better for you than bowing 1,000 times in prayer.'

"The Prophet also said, 'Anyone who denies his knowledge when asked will be silenced forever by fire on the Day of Resurrection.'

"Scholars have encouraged every movement which advocated righteousness. They did that out of their faith in the noble objective. They spurned every device that was not lawful, and they acted as a safety valve, protecting people from corruption. Al-Azhar's scholars have never been out of the picture. They are professors of religion, of the Arabic language and of Islamic jurisprudence in al-Azhar's institutions. They also teach in schools, universities, mosques, societies and in the ranks of the army.

"We have to recognize, nevertheless, that these young people are our children and that we owe it to them to present them with the proper knowledge that is in step with the tendency of the age. We hope that this knowledge will enable them to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong. We hope it will guide them to the path of righteousness. We must stay away completely from any violent method, and we must not use force to oppose these young people."

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EGYPT

TALES OF ARABIAN NIGHTS TRIAL ENDS

East Burnham ARABIA: THE ISLAMIC WORLD REVIEW in English Aug 86 p 74

[Article by Moetazz Shukri]

[Text] After some seven months in the dock, facing a charge of obscenity, the classic Arabic tales of the "Thousand and One Nights" were at last rehabilitated as a "source of inspiration for innumerable works of art of the highest perfection", according to an appeal court in Cairo.

For almost a year, Egypt was nearly turned into a battlefield over the book. While its opponents raised the demand to "burn it", its supporters raised the slogan, "No going back to the inquisition courts."

The whole affair started in mid-1985, when having come across a profusion of obscene words in an old version of the "Thousand and One Nights" a legal action was brought against the publisher. The charge: publishing pornography. The prosecution based its argument on provisions in the law making pornography illegal and proceeded with the case in defence of the morality of the Egyptian people — especially the young generation.

A great debate was sparked off and hardly a single columnist, writer or public figure missed the chance of airing their own opinions. Cartoonists also joined in the ongoing fray, taking, on the whole, the side of absolute freedom of literary expression. Other Arab newspapers were not slow in making the issue the butt of their jokes.

In the literary world, opinions were firmly divided into two camps. Ahmed Bahgat, a prominent columnist and literary figure supported the prosecution maintaining that it was its duty to protect the morality of the people. "I am not calling for burning the

book," he said, "but rather for confiscating the version containing the flagrant sexual references".

The majority of men of letters, however, including Muslim scholars argued that the "pornographic" parts in total do not exceed more than two pages if condensed in relation to the 2000 pages of the whole masterpiece. They said that generation after generation had read the book in the original without complaining because everyone with a minimal literary background is well aware of the fact that all books of heritage contained some explicit words in a justifiable way. Mahmoud Shaker, a member of the Academy of Arabic in Cairo and a Muslim thinker even said that there was no point in condemning the explicit language as it is not in the interest of the people to be ignorant of it.

On the first court hearing, the publishers were found guilty and the confiscation of all copies of that version was ordered. This resulted in a huge secret demand for the book which caused its price to soar to LE100 per copy on the black market (compared with the original LE5).

In conclusion to the story which Sheherazade would have narrated as tale No. 1002 if she heard it, the Court of Appeal quashed the lower court's verdict. The "Thousand and One Nights" was acquitted of the charges of pornography after it was concluded that there had never been any intention of immorality or offending public morality. The court also referred to other heritage books with similar material openly published and in circulation on a large scale.

MOROCCO

POLITICAL FIGURES DISCUSS FUTURE OF DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 2-8 Jul 86 pp 24-27

[Article by Talhah Jibril: "Future of Morocco's Democratic Experiment"]

[Text] Two inseparable issues preoccupy Morocco's political circles. The first concerns parliamentary practices and the second, related to the first, concerns the future and horizons of the Moroccan democratic experiment.

Recently, the opposition parties criticized parliamentary practices severely and the newspapers published lengthy editorials demanding rehabilitation of the country's elected institutions, expressing great resentment over the fact that the Chamber of Deputies' latest session has been empty of any real action and saying that "this white session undermines the Chamber of Deputies' importance, obstructs the progress of economic and social life, and gives the people who are waging the election campaign the impression that the Chamber of Deputies is unnecessary as long as it does not do what the constitution requires it to do."

Another newspaper has gone further, saying that "it seems as if our country's political activity is frozen. We hear of the Chamber of Deputies only once a week when this chamber convenes its session which is designated for verbal questioning. As for the government, we hardly hear anything about it, except that it has convened its weekly session and heard the reports of some ministers. This inactivity cannot be the result of the absence of issues that need to be tackled, studied, and solved. Matters have reached a point where anyone who is jealous for his country cannot remain silent."

Is Picture This Gloomy?

Before answering the question, we will quote King Hassan II on the horizons and future of the democratic experiment as he sees it, considering that the current criticism of parliamentary practices and of the institutions' performance is, essentially, an endeavor to warn of the possibilities that the experiment will encounter a setback or, in other words, an endeavor to cast shadows on the future on which all Moroccans, without exception, wager on developing and enriching the experiment or pluralism.

King Hassan II has said: "My constant ambition is for people to speak one day of Moroccan democracy as they speak of U.S., British, or French democracy." On another occasion, he said: "If the Moroccan opposition ceases to exist for any reason, then we will create or imagine a new opposition because without opposition, there can be no real democracy. I believe that the continued presence of national institutions constitutes undoubtedly the best bastion and bulwark against the adventures of a maniac or of a megalomaniac."

Another question is whether the experiment is suffering currently from bottlenecks that have let heavy air pass through its channels.

Links of Democratic Series

New political formations and organizations surfaced with the start of 1976 in what is known in Morocco as the "democratic series." The makeup of these organizations did not please the traditional parties which had lived with the storms and calm and with the disappointments and hopes of political life since the time prior to independence. The traditional parties did not deal with the newcomers as rivals seeking to storm the political activity arena with different bannerlines and slogans. Rather, the traditional parties' leaders spoke bitterly of the "unnatural birth seeking to water down the experiment" and put the blame on the circles who delivered the organizations from a womb whose capability to produce is doubtful.

Despite the clarity and the ambiguity harbored in these phrases simultaneously, the newcomers were able to prove their capability and attract people. They offered uncommon ideas and they shared between them the legislative and executive institutions, leaving the veterans to eat the sour grapes.

However, all did not go well with the parties formed after 1976 because the splits and divisions within these parties made matters more complicated and cast their shadows on the experiment.

National Rally of Independents: It was formed in October 1978 under the leadership of Ahmed Osman (who was prime minister at the time). This party obtained a majority in the September 1977 elections. The party's organizational structures had hardly been completed when restlessness surfaced in the party. This restlessness turned quickly into a splinter movement led by four ministers (Arsalane El Jadidi, Moussa Saadi, Ahmed Belhadj, and Khali Hanna Ould Errachid). The splinter movement raised a loose slogan calling for attention to be given to the semi-desert and accusing the party leadership of favoring the urban rich and the big merchants and officials.

A group was formed in the parliament under the name of the Democratic Liberals and this group was transformed in 1981 into the National Democratic Party after a tempestuous conference held in Casablanca. But in the November 1984 election, the party lost ground at the electoral level (28 seats in the current parliament), its leadership withdrew, and some of its members joined the Constitutional Union Party, which had been formed in April 1984. The turmoil which started with the split in the National Rally of Independents has applied in one way or another to the parliamentary and political map.

The Popular Movement: Even though this party was founded in 1958, and even though it is not, consequently, classified as one of the new parties coming into existence in the wake of the "democratic series," the circumstances experienced by this party recently have been reflected on the political arena, considering that it has been a loyalist party since its foundation.

In the wake of the latest parliamentary elections in 1984, it was not clear where the Popular Movement Party would stand. However, the bitter criticism voiced by Mahjoubi Aherdane, the party leader, in various press interviews against influential officials led the party to join the opposition ranks voluntarily. What is interesting is that the party's parliamentary group was not pleased with its leader's position and elected to stand with the government's majority even though the party is no longer represented in the current cabinet.

What has intensified the Popular Movement's internal crisis is the discovery of major acts of embezzlement in the Ministry of Posts, which was headed by Mahjoubi Aherdane. This discovery has dragged prominent names within the party ranks into the courts.

The situation continues to be vague insofar as the organizational condition in the party is concerned even though Mahjoubi Aherdane distributed 2 weeks ago a statement announcing the imminent convocation of a plenary National Council, for which no date has been set, "to study some organizational affairs and to discuss the political, social, and economic issues in order to bolster the procession of liberation and democracy within the framework of the constitutional monarchy and of our sublime sanctities and also to modify and renew the Central Committee's structure and to elect a chairman for the National Council."

The Constitutional Union: This party was founded under the leadership of Maati Bouabid in April 1984 and entered the municipal councils and the parliament, raising the slogan of renewal and economic liberalism. The party surprised many by gaining the majority in the parliament with 83 seats even though the other parties have engaged in skirmishes against this party since its birth.

This party recently experienced some problems which have led many to expect a split within its ranks. The surfacing part of these problems has clearly been reflected on the party's press establishment, which has reiterated that an attempt by one of the party's wings to control it is what led to the disappearance of the party's daily for a period of time. The daily then resumed publication without any reference to the causes of the disappearance. Another aspect of the problem is the resignation of a small number of the party's deputies whereas a number of other deputies have refrained from taking part in its meetings. There has been incessant talk in the partisan circles about the Constitutionalists' problems even though Maati Bouabid has been ceaselessly trying to contain these problems.

These are some features of the picture in the majority parties--features that have reflected on the experiment negatively. In an endeavor to complete the other aspects of the picture, AL-MAJALLAH has posed a specific question to the heads of the parliamentary blocs in the Moroccan Parliament, namely: How do you view the real situation of the parliamentary practice and the horizons and future of the democratic experiment in Morocco?

Following is the outcome of the answers received by AL-MAJALLAH:

Post-independence Generations

In response to our question, Abderrazak Rouissi, the chairman of the Constitutional Union bloc, said: "The democratic life that has developed and surpassed the phase of experimentation has given our country the capability to safeguard parliamentary action in its capacity as an advanced civilization-al formula for rallying a country's living capabilities, especially a country like Morocco which believes in representation and embraces partisan and unionist pluralism and the freedom of the foundation of associations in the various fields.

"The parliamentary life which began in the 1960's has not entered the phase of maturity. Democratic awareness has grown among the citizens and, through them, among the parliamentarians, thanks to the option take by King Hassan II-- an option seeking to build the Moroccan citizen under the canopy of a constitutional monarchic system in which man is the instrument and objective of all economic and social development.

"Under the canopy of this fundamental option and of this distinguished intellectual position, interaction, dealing, and communication take place among all the bodies and organizations forming the Moroccan people in their entirety. Therefore, we can confirm without any hesitation that the Constitutional Union derives the substance of its policy and program from these clear and firm given facts as they are embodied clearly in our visualizations of the future."

Rouissi added: "We in the Constitutional Union make the entrenchment of parliamentary life, the reinforcement of its mainstays, and the spreading of its climate some of our main objectives. We, who believe that we represent the post-independence generations, realize that the ambition and objective of these generations are to establish a sound and lasting parliamentary life capable of mobilizing all the capabilities and of opening the door to all so that each citizen may contribute his share through the various constitutional institutions, be they local or parliamentary councils, to managing the country's affairs at the various levels.

"We are nearing the end of the second year of the fourth parliament's term and we believe from our position in the Constitutional Union that parliamentary life has begun to bear fruit. There is no better indication of this than the presence of the various political and unionist currents and social

segments under the parliament's dome and their participation in legislative affairs and in control over the government's actions or their undertaking the responsibility of managing local affairs through the local groups which we consider to be mini-parliaments at the level of the country's various population centers."

Regarding the horizons of the democratic experience, Rouissi said: "The country's democratic situation is sound. If the constitution guarantees the formation of parties, unions and associations, free opinion, and other aspects of public liberty, then the reality is the best proof confirming the soundness of this course. We believe that under the leadership of King Hassan II, the guarantor of the country's liberties, we have entered an advanced phase of parliamentary action and of expansion of the powers of the local population groups, especially with the new tendency that has begun to bear fruit--namely the tendency to set up in the provinces constitutional institutions that care for the life and manage the affairs of a population group bigger than the existing local groups.

"We in the Constitutional Union believe that the democratic action's future will be rich with various kinds of practices. Therefore, our group in the parliament has blessed this sound tendency to set up provincial institutions that undertake broader responsibilities and that are vested with broader powers to manage the population's affairs. This is a pioneer act and an advanced form of decentralism and of democratic life in the country."

Rouissi went on to add: "Insofar as the free economic system is concerned, we have surpassed the phase of principles and generalities and have entered the phase of the actual application of this system with our intensifying interest in the free initiative and with our encouraging the private sectors with all the means. All have begun to believe in the ability of these sectors to perform the decisive role in the economic and social development process. To achieve the desired objectives, more and more thought is given and greater endeavors are being made to expand the sphere of the private sectors' action at the expense of the public sectors.

"Insofar as the developmental tendency is concerned, the criterion distinguishing the private sector lies fundamentally in this sector's ability to utilize ideally the available national economic resources. Consequently, the broad post-independence generations who have gained education and skills and who seek the opportunity for work and success can achieve their aspirations.

"On the basis of the principles we have noted, we try, moreover, to distribute the results throughout the national economy so as to achieve complete and coordinated development in all the Moroccan provinces."

Concluding, Rouissi said: "The democratic system has been beneficial to Morocco's economic and social development and has achieved political and social stability for Morocco. As a bloc in the Chamber of Deputies, we are aware of the responsibility we shoulder to create the right climate for achieving greater understanding and for entrenching the humanitarian consideration."

Demand for Impartial Elections

Abdelhaq Tazi, chairman of the Istiqlal Party (opposition) bloc, said in response to the question:

"Democracy has been and continues to be one of the Moroccan people's fundamental objectives. As for us in the Istiqlal Party, democracy was the second article in the document demanding independence--11 January 1944.

"The Moroccan people have struggled to crystallize this objective. The initial phases--the declaration of the 1961 constitution--were positive.

"After this victory, Morocco could have followed its natural course. But regrettably, we noticed the presence of pressure groups seeking to preserve their interests. Those groups began to exert efforts to 'forge the people's will' by rigging the first local elections held in the country in 1960. All the elections following declaration of the first constitution, of the second constitution in 1970, and of the third constitution in 1972 experienced some violation."

Tazi added: "The pressure forces have worked and continue to work to cause hope in the democratic system to be lost. But the Moroccan people have always made a distinction and continue to make a distinction between the objective, namely democracy, and the means used to distort democracy and to divert the citizens from their objective with means that do not at all serve the country's supreme interest but serve the private interest of those who employ these means.

"It is noticed that in 1963, forgery occurred on a smaller scale than in later elections. The 1970 elections were totally rigged. This occurred in the days of General Oufkir. In the wake of the Green Procession and of Morocco's restoration of its Sahara provinces, we expected the experience to be better but what happened was the exact opposite. Despite this, we felt optimistic over the country's entry into a democratic series in which the intensity of forgery lessened somewhat, whether in the 1976 local elections or the 1977-83 general elections. The experiment was somewhat successful because the 1977-83 parliament served its legislative term for the first time in the history of Morocco's democracy.

"However, it is noticed, very regrettably, that there was a return of 'Oufkir's method' in the local elections of 10 June 1983 and in the general elections of 14 September 1984. This caused the partial elections of 17 April 1986 to occur in an atmosphere of indifference and of disinterest in voting because the citizens have become tired of these methods that cause the constitutional institutions (be they local or national) to lose all credibility.

"It can be said that there is decline in the democratic series and in democratic life, as there is decline in relations between the executive agency and the legislative agency. The executive agency's supporters, especially in the rural areas, are with those elected. At the national level, they resort to methods that cannot but devoid any democratic experiment of its meaning. Consequently, it is natural that we notice that the parliament elected in 1984 is one that does not perform its duty. The absence of the majority deputies and their failure to perform their legislative duty as they should prevail upon the situation. This is, as I have said, natural because one cannot expect from a deputy who does not truly and worthily represent his voters with anything other than insensitivity to responsibility and a lack of professional conscience. Within this framework, it can be said that the current spring session is a white session. It is noticed that there is improper action, such as the action in which the executive authority engages vis-a-vis the legislative authority. There is very little cooperation and this is a clear embodiment of the lack of a political will for dialogue and cooperation, and how badly we need this dialogue and cooperation! We need a national consensus to counter the external challenges facing our country.

"In addition to the Sahara issue, we are faced with economic challenges from the European Group [EEC]. These challenges are likely to generate social challenges which cannot be overcome unless serious efforts are made and national consensus is achieved on the need to crystallize the Moroccan people's will for democracy in the realm of reality. This course is necessary for taking daring steps that bring the country out of its crises and that open the future horizons for us through national political, economic, social, and cultural measures."

Concluding, Tazi said: "We believe that democracy should rise. Therefore, the hands of custodianship that have corrupted the people's will must be lifted from this will. Consequently, the future horizons depend, insofar as we are concerned, on how well the people's will is embodied and how well the Moroccan people's confidence is restored through being provided with the opportunity to express their will with utter freedom and to regain their dignity and their freedom."

Difficult Equation

Tahar Chakri, chairman of the National Democratic Party bloc, said:

"Parliamentary action in our country has gone through three phases, namely the 1963 and 1970 experiments and, finally, the 1979 phase in which the current Chamber of Deputies lives. This phase is, in fact, a pioneer step on the democratic path from which there will be no retreat, as King Hassan II has said.

"What distinguishes our country's parliamentary life with rationalism and allows it to encompass all the given facts that contribute to entrenching democracy is partisan pluralism. The constitution prohibits absolutely the application of the single-party system. This means that our democracy is derived from our genuine nature and from the spirit of Islam. Free opinion and expression are fundamental bases on which rely the internal political game and the activities of the unions and the parties which are considered social and political schools.

"If the Moroccan Parliament's structure is subject to direct and indirect balloting, then this means that the legislator has sought to have all the groups and organizations represented in the Chamber of Deputies. This is a true image of the pioneering nature of our country's legislative action and, consequently, of the soundness and correctness of the democratic system in which all of the country's political parties participate, including the National Democratic Party which is represented by a group that is aware of the immensity of the responsibility and that has contributed effectively to building up the democratic dialogue between the legislative and executive agencies. This is what has enabled the group to achieve some of the aspirations of the democrats and to fulfill some of the promises it had made to its voters, especially in the countryside."

Firm Experience

Ahmed Belhadj, the Moroccan Parliament's first deputy speaker, puts Morocco's parliamentary practice within a historical framework through which he analyzes the development of this practice from entrenchment of the principle of consulting the group to entrenchment of the principle of Islamic consultation and of seeking the opinion of the ulema in drafting the first Moroccan constitution in 1908 and in formulating the national movement's document demanding independence in 1944. As one of its demands, this document called for application of the democratic system in the country.

Ahmed Belhadj added: "Morocco has always been saturated with the spirit of democratic action. There is no better proof of this than the fact that upon his return from exile, King Mohamad V issued a decree on 3 August 1956 forming the first national consultative council known to independent Morocco. This council was the first brick in the foundation of democratic action. King Hassan then promulgated in 1962 the first constitution entrenching a reality already in existence and unwritten democratic rules which the regime had practiced.

Ahmed Belhadj pointed out the succession of parliaments as part of his listing of the manifestations of parliamentary practice, saying: "After two experiments, the first begun in 1963 and the second in 1970, Morocco

was able to complete its second [presumably meaning third] experiment with full success when the third parliament, elected in 1977, was able to complete its legislative term in 1983."

Belhadj added: "The parliamentary practice emanates fundamentally from a firm conviction in the importance of this practice and from entrenched democratic conduct. Therefore, the succession of parliamentary experiments and, more importantly, the insistence on collective opinion and on enacting the principle of consultation is proof of the firmness of the principle of parliamentary practice in Moroccan political life and Moroccan conduct." Belhadj went on to say: "This development, which has produced generations experienced in parliamentary action and parliamentary institutions at the level of local groups and of the country and the reinforcement of this action on the bases of sound democratic dialogue, is a development that can only be in the direction of the better and more comprehensive and that will leave its imprint on the other aspects of the country's public life and on society's members.

"The parliament's control over the government comes through several channels. Verbal and written questions constitute one of these channels. In addition to its legislative task of issuing laws by approving the bills submitted by the deputies themselves, the parliament also has the task of watching over the government in accordance with the constitution's provisions. However, this control requires the parliament to be fully informed of all aspects of the government's activities.

"The verbal and written questions are means that enable the parliament to observe the government's activity and accomplishments in all the vital sectors and that provide all the parliamentary groups and the deputies, especially the opposition which finds in the questions its desired objective of voicing criticism and advice and of offering alternatives to what it criticizes, to bring the government to account.

"In order that we may not remain within the bounds of verbal and written questions as a sole means for watching over the government, we can say, for example, that control over the government is also exercised through the cabinet statement submitted by the cabinet to the parliament as soon as the cabinet is appointed by the king. This act provides the parliament with the chance to subject the cabinet to a careful debate in which the opposition is distinguished by its critical positions.

"Moreover, the debate on the fiscal law in the committees and in the General Assembly is another means of exercising parliamentary control over the government, especially since the cabinet is required to supply the parliament with all the documents and data it needs in order that it may discuss them and exercise effective control over the government. The debate on bills and on proposed bills is nothing but more proof of the parliament's control. Moreover, there is the control mechanism which permits the parliament to oppose the cabinet's continued stay in power."

Dr Abdallah Laroui: Democracy Will Not Solve Our Problems Because It Poses New Problems

On the subject of democracy, Moroccan intellectual Abdallah Laroui holds, as usual, an exclusively different opinion. Laroui said: "A new visualization believing that the solution of the Arab problems lies in democracy may have developed. Whereas the Arabs were not concerned with the issue of democracy only 10 years ago, they have now suddenly returned to the belief that the solution lies in democracy. This is not true. Democracy will further complicate our problems. Staying within the framework of a democratic experiment may seem positive but democracy will not solve any problem. Rather, it will contribute to complicating the problems because it will pose new problems.

"There is no solution other than returning to democracy temporarily. But if we advocate this solution and if we can raise the problems for discussion, the officials may be compelled to take into consideration the internal public opinion, which will inevitably be influenced by the Arab public opinion. Consequently, there seems to be a risk of returning to the climate of the 1960's.

"Our terminology must be precise. When we speak of democracy, do we truly mean actual application?

"Clearly, I do not imagine that the cultural standard prevalent in the Arab world at present can give democracy an actual role. Despite this, I prefer democratic practice to non-democratic practice. But I have my reservation on the claim that democracy is the right solution to our problems. The proof is currently evident in Sudan. The problems existing there are economic problems and problems of the unity of the land. Democracy does not solve these problems. Democracy may only help us explore the solutions. If we say that the solution lies in democracy, I fear we will be exposed to frustrations if democracy fails to bear fruit.

"We have perhaps noticed that after 40 years of dictatorship, Spain, for example, resorted to democracy to solve its problems. When the problems intensified under the canopy of democracy, this democracy was nearly murdered."

Laroui believes that democracy must be founded on complete economic development, comprehensive social development, and an essential national unity.

In this context, he believes that Morocco's monarchy has always symbolized national unity, which is something positive. He said: "Democracy requires fundamental social agreement and respect for state and society because democracy, like a plant, cannot grow without roots."

Regarding the parties' role in enriching the democratic experiment, Laroui noted that the Moroccan parties, especially the national parties, have not

rejuvenated themselves from within. He believes that these parties have failed to absorb thousands of educated youths and that the ultimate objective of the parties should be the objective of being turned into schools that graduate experienced cadres who nurture the state machine and agencies.

Regarding the issue of opposition and loyalty, he believes that "it is necessary for any party to exercise government because no party staying out of government for many years can acclimatize itself to the circumstances and given facts of governing. He cited as an example the position of the Labor Party in Britain, which is considered the most deep-rooted Western country in the area of parliamentary practice, saying: "The fact that Labor has been out of government for many years will cause this party difficult problems if it gains power."

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MOROCCO

POPULAR MOVEMENT LEADER'S CAREER DISCUSSED

London AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 7 Jul 86 p 14

[Article by Mustafa al-'Alawi: "Blessing Restored to Movement"]

[Text] People could not believe their eyes when they saw Mahjoubi Aherdane, the Popular Movement leader, sitting in the frontline in which all the leaders of the Moroccan parties, without exception, were crowded on that radiant evening at the royal palace in Casablanca.

The occasion was the inauguration by his majesty the king of Morocco of the national debate among the Moroccan electoral groups. It has been planned to give this debate a grand and imposing character even though it was of a purely internal nature. Numerous leaders of the world's governments and mayors of major cities were invited to the debate, including Yusuf Sabri, the mayor of Cairo, who entered the royal palace and sat in the frontlines next to Shams Munir Badran, the Egyptian charge d'affaires, who has begun to attend Morocco's official functions next to the other ambassadors and, as already noted, next to the Algerian charge d'affairs in Rabat.

Ruhi al-Khatib, the former mayor of Jerusalem, took part in this ceremony with an address in which he did not say, "We will pray in Jerusalem," as the late King Faysal had promised, but said: "I prayed in Jerusalem next to King Mohamed V. Morocco's liberator." What made the address of the mayor of Dixon City, considered the election headquarters of President Reagan, who spoke with American naivete about the means capable of enhancing the backward societies, embodied solely in freedom and in donning the spirit of true democracy--what made the address of this mayor significant is that he said: "Rulers are not entitled to deal with their opponents violently and belligerently." King Hassan II responded more cleverly and intelligently when he said: "I commit you to good-neighbor relations and to fruitful relations with our neighboring local groups so that they may grow and flourish. I commit you to freedom, to safeguarding freedom, and to honoring freedom. I commit you not to betray freedom."

Numerous particulars transformed the Casablanca palace, which had been scheduled to host an Arab summit in those days, into a racetrack where all competed to cling to and raise the banners of democracy and social justice.

But the only particular which gripped the interest of the Moroccans watching the live television transmission of this celebration was the presence of Mahjoubi Aherdane, the Popular Movement secretary general, in a prominent place among the audience.

This "strong interest" in this "minor detail" is certainly due to the numerous wagers that had been made on the fate of the only leader who crossed the barren desert of rejection at the peak of Moroccan partisan integration and national solidarity. Those interested in Moroccan politics had wagered among themselves that Aherdane would not emerge safely from the drains of this desert, having chased a bright mirage which he had thought to be water and having found nothing but troubles and difficulties upon reaching this mirage.

A few months ago, the select group close to Mahjoubi Aherdane, whether those working with him in the Ministry of Posts when he was the minister of communications or those in the structures of the party whose secretary general he continues to be, was arrested on the charge of embezzling funds from the National Postal Bureau. Moreover, two prominent French managers of the Thomson Company, which had been assigned to supply Morocco with postal equipment under circumstances which will be revealed by the ongoing investigation, were also arrested and are still in al-'Alu prison in Rabat. All the defendants have been referred to the prosecuting judge in the special court of justice.

Thus, Aherdane, who had disappeared from the official reception halls, whose name had been struck out of the protocol lists, and who had disappeared for nearly 2 years from all the gatherings in which all leaders of the parties took part, has now returned with head high to attend by official invitation from the minister of interior an official function headed by his majesty the country's king.

Aherdane-U.S. Friendship

Aherdane, whose dossier AL-DUSTUR was the first Arab magazine to open (see issue No 240 of AL-DUSTUR and Aherdane's response in issue No 244), is not new or alien to the Moroccan political arena. Rather, he is one of the prominent figures and leaders of this arena. He represents the popular bedouin and mountain blocs and he founded with Dr (Abdelkarim El Khatib), his comrade in the liberation army, the first political organization opposing the influence of the Istiqlal Party before this party splintered in 1959. But with the passage of time, Aherdane acclimatized himself to the reality and contributed to the game with utter seriousness. In recent years, he experienced the pricks of remorse and in 1979 we heard him raise his voice in the parliament as loudly as he could to say: "We have rushed behind our personal interests and have forgotten the tears of the orphaned and the grief of the widows." His aspirations and ambitions went even further in following years and he published in 1985 a book of verses in French, entitled

in the Berber language "Aknus Natilas," which means in Arabic "In the Gloom of Darkness." In this book, we find the poet, not the minister, and the man in the street, not the party leader, say:

I sleep in my prison only to wake up spirited,
Fearing not for my perdition;
Because I am on the path of the pious who are my kinsmen.

After the publication of this collection of poems, Aherdane entered the barren desert of rejection only to send every now and then a shout from the wilderness, such as the one voiced in the Spanish EL PAIS (issue No 17 of May 1985). In this case, Aherdane swerved from the framework which a former minister and a secretary general of a party forming part of the obedient majority is supposed to observe and walked over the mirror, as the Berber proverb goes, by saying: "France's lackeys, who did nothing for independence, are responsible for the catastrophic reality under which we now live." He reiterated the same words in issue No 17 of the Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE when he declared war on the "merchants" of politics, of course. Aherdane was not content with declaring these ideas which are considered truly new in a world that has turned old but went to the United States where he forged with some of its friendships which are perhaps circumstantial because the Aherdane-U.S. friendship surfaced at a time when chilliness and estrangement dominated official Moroccan-U.S. relations in the wake of conclusion of the Oujda agreement with the Libyan Jamahiriyyah, keeping in mind that Aherdane does not harbor much friendship for some Arab leaders.

But Aherdane's friendship with the Americans was his big mistake--a mistake whose dirty laundry he did not air over Moroccan rooftops.

We wonder: Was it this mistake which prepared Aherdane for this theatrical return which coincided with restoration of the friendly Moroccan-U.S. atmosphere?

In any case, President Reagan's invitation to the Moroccan king was announced recently and the king will pay an official working visit to the United States in the final week of this month of July.

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SUDAN

STUDENT UNION PRESIDENT INTERVIEWED

East Burnham ARABIA: THE ISLAMIC WORLD REVIEW in English Aug 86 pp 70-71

[Interview with Zaidan Abdu Zaidan, president of the Khartoum University Students Union; date and place not given]

[Text]  The Khartoum University Student Union (KUSU) occupies a significant place in Sudan's national politics. The Union has played a prominent role in the national liberation movement and the movement for the restoration of democracy. Many of the leading student leaders are now in parliament. Ali Osman Mohammed Taha for example, who is the leader of the Islamic National Front in the Sudanese Parliament was an active student leader. So are several other prominent MPs.

The Union has been active since 1946. Until 1973 it followed the proportional representation system which ensured most leading political parties a representation in the Union. But since 1973, the Union has been following the procedure of direct representation. University students numbering around 8,000 elect 40 members to the union who then elect the Union office bearers. From 1973 until now (excepting 1980 and 1984) the Union has always been controlled by the student wing of the Islamic party now known as the Islamic National Front.

The Islamic Trend works among university and school students. Last year the Union councillors elected Zaidan Abdu Zaidan as president. Zaidan is a 25 year old medical student. Arabia recently spoke to him about the Union activities and the issues which Sudanese youth in general face in the country. Excerpts are given here.

"The Union has two types of activities, national, and internal. The Union

presents the student's viewpoint on political, economic and social issues of national importance. It also takes public action to make its voice heard and on various occasions has opposed the dictatorial policies of the previous regime.

The internal issues which are concentrated on include academic affairs, sports and cultural activities and accommodation problems. The Union has an independent budget, and allocates funds for various activities. It also gets involved in community work, works for the upliftment of the poor and organises social work camps. The Union has participated in famine relief work by organising activities among the refugees.

"The great majority of students in Sudan support the Islamic Trend. The fact that the Islamic National Front won all graduate seats from North Sudan in the recent elections is a proof that students are in favour of Islamic parties.

"Students are watching the present government's performance very carefully. Issues such as the implementation of Sharia higher education and social justice are high on their agenda. The Khartoum University Student Union in particular will not be a passive spectator if the government tries to adopt policies not corresponding to the aspirations of the people. Sudan has severe economic problems. Poverty is rampant. Illiteracy is widely present. Unemployment among educated and illiterate youth is high. Due to the lack of

opportunities many of the Sudanese youth have to migrate abroad. These and many other problems can be overcome if the youth are also involved in the policy formation.

"In Sudan girls are as active in student politics as boys. The University Student Union has five female representatives. The representation will increase with the increased participation of females in union activities. The University's girl students also participate in various social and community projects.

"The Union also organises public lectures on national and social issues. The Union under the Islamic Declaration has made efforts to put across the message of Islam on various social issues to youth. We want the Union to become an integral part of the society and the country. We do not want students to live in ivory towers. The Islamic Declaration-led unions all over Sudan are making concrete efforts in this direction".

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SUDAN

CONTROVERSY OVER DEMOLISHING SHANTY DWELLINGS

Rural Solidarity Protests Dismantling

Khartoum SUNA in English 16 Jul 86 p 12

[Text] Rural Forces Solidarity will sue Housing Minister for ordering the dismantling of slums at Suba, a suburb north of here, according to the Solidarity's spokesman.

The Solidarity, a political alliance advocating promotion of backward areas, said the Minister's decision reflects an attitude towards the rural emigrants quite similar to that of the former regime.

The Alliance said the decision runs contrary to the declared government's policy towards the shanties and added it views the dismantling as inhumane and racial in essence.

The Solidarity called for radical solution for the problem by studying of the reasons that led people to desert their original homeland.

Authorities Destroy Shanties

Khartoum SUNA in English 17 Jul 86 p 9

[Text] All Shanty dwellings in areas of planned housing in the Khartoum will be demolished according to sources at the National Capital's Shanty Dwelling Administration.

The source said authorities had destroyed shanties on plots originally allocated for schools and public squares in Arkaweit residential area south of Khartoum.

He said two merchants had earlier laid their hands on the area, divided it neatly into plots of 800 square metres which were sold out.

The source said shanty dwellings on a land allocated for a military technical workshop had also been removed.

The source said families having no housing would be received in a nomad area.

Minister Defends Policy

Khartoum SUDAN TIMES in English 18 Jul 86 p 1

[Text] The Minister of Public Works and Housing, Sayed Mohamed Jailani said yesterday that the government will press ahead with its programme to recover government land from shanty dwellers inspite of the row being raised by some politicians. He said that the recovery of this land is part of the government policy to liquidate the vestiges of the defunct May regime.

The Minister said that luxurious illegal dwellings could not be called shanty dwellings and are certainly part of the May regime's corruption which the government is determine to put an end to. He said that the

government has already recovered government land worth more than ten million pounds in this week's operations only. He said that this is an illegal wealth in the hands of land merchants who are by any standard criminals and the government has a duty to bring an end to their illegal dealings in land.

The Minister said that the government, while removing shanty dwellers from the land they now occupy illegally, the government will find them alternative dwellings in what he called the nomads temporary settlement until the government studies their problem and finds a permanent solution to it.

Conference To Study Problems

Khartoum SUNA in English 21 Jul 86 pp 2, 3

[Text] A National conference on shanty dwellings will be convened by the National Committee for shanty dwellings (NCSD) under the guardian of Mohammed El Hassan Abdalla Yassin and Ali Hassen Tagedden, members of the Supreme Council.

The (NCSD) chairman Abdalla Adam Khater said the committee had earlier met with Yassin, Tagedden and Housing Minister Mohamed Tahir Jilani.

He said the three had confirmed the government's concern over providing housing for all citizens. They also stressed the government's determination to combat land-brokery and welcomed any popular effort towards regulation of popular housing.

The committee comprises representatives of shanty dwellings in Omdurman, Khartoum North and Khartoum.

It aims at coordinating popular and official efforts in tackling housing problems.

SUDAN

BRIEFS

WORKERS' DELEGATIONS TRAVEL TO USSR--A number of Worker delegations will leave next month, for U.S., Egypt and the Soviet Union, SUNA learned. Chairman of the Sudan Workers Trade Unions Federation Mohamed Osman Gama' told (SUNA) that a high-level workers delegation will visit the U.S.A. in response to an invitation by the American Workers Trade Union. Another delegation will leave for Egypt to attend a three-month enlightenment course in response to an invitation by the African-American Labour Centre in Cairo. A delegation will also leave for the Soviet Union to attend a 3-week seminar on worker education, he added. [Text] [Khartoum SUNA in English 19 Jul 86 p 1] /13104

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ISRAEL

MILITARY TRAINING AREA RETURNED TO ARAB OWNERS

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 Aug 86 p 2

[Article by Elaine Ruth Fletcher]

[Text]

Area 9, a military training area in Galilee which was established in the days of the Mandate, is to be returned to its Arab owners - while publicly-owned portions of the land will be put to civilian use.

A four-man government ministerial committee, including Prime Minister Peres and Defence Minister Rabin, announced the move yesterday after studying the controversial issue for over a year.

"After 42 years, this is clearly a historical event," said Dr. Yosef Ginat, senior adviser to Minister-without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman, who was also a member of the committee. Ginat noted that the British first designated the area as a military firing zone in 1944.

Mohammed Ghanain, head of the Sakhnin local council, whose villagers own much of the area at the centre of the controversy, responded ecstatically to the government decision.

"This is the happiest day of my life," Ghanain said. "This is even better than hearing that I won in the elections. Now I have no problem in seeing this region develop with the two peoples, Jews and Arabs, together."

"The fruit of this will be for the good of the Israeli state," he added. "It's better than excellent."

Over the last four decades, the area, which is also near Deir Hanna and Arraba, has been the site of repeated confrontations between IDF training units and Arab farmers. The farmers kept planting olive trees and other crops on their closed-off land, only to have them uprooted.

Ginat said that Weizman's office - which oversees Arab affairs - first requested a re-evaluation of Area 9 last year.

The ministerial committee, which also includes Agriculture Minister Arye Nehamkin, decided to return the land to civilian control following consultations with security authorities, he said.

"The military is a dynamic system," Ginat said. "Our office asked the military to reassess the situation. They did so, and decided they could go to other areas."

But Ginat cautioned that the military withdraw from Area 9, which should take place within the next week, may create more pressure on other military training areas where land disputes with Arab farmers also exist.

Military sources, meanwhile, told *The Jerusalem Post* that opening the area was a government decision, and that while it would present some problems, the decision would be implemented.

The portion of Area 9 still off-limits to Arab farmers is quite small compared to the 62,000 dunams originally seized by the British for military training, Ginat said.

That closed-off area comprises 6,850 dunams, of which 1,500 are owned by residents of Sakhnin, said Ghanain.

The remaining 55,000 dunams are already being cultivated by Arabs or are held by the state, and no practical change would occur in their status, Ginat said.

Still, closure of a portion of the land has been a source of constant frustration to Arab farmers who often saw their property lying idle, said Shmuel Toledano, former Arab affairs adviser to the government.

Toledano praised the recent decision, saying that it came after "38 years of troubles when many families saw their land near them and were not able to get in and cultivate, even when the army was not using the area."

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ISRAEL

DISPUTE OVER CIVIL SERVICE POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS WORSENING

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 6 Aug 86 p 2

[Article by Roy Isacowitz]

[Text]

TEL AVIV. -- The dispute over political appointments in the civil service deepened yesterday when hundreds of Employment Service workers from around the country held an emergency meeting to protest the impending dismissal of service head Baruch Haklai.

The meeting ended with the demand that political appointments be rescinded and that all agreements with the Labour Ministry regarding work conditions in the service be implemented. Participants said after the meeting that they would consider industrial action if their demands were not met.

But Labour Minister Moshe Katzav (Likud), speaking after the meeting, reaffirmed his determination to replace Haklai with Herut stalwart David Mena.

"The issue does not concern the workers," Katzav told Israel Radio, adding that the replacement of Haklai after nine years at the helm, would "rejuvenate" the service.

Addressing the protest meeting, which was held at Histadrut headquarters here, Histadrut Secretary-General Yisrael Kessar affirmed the right of ministers to choose politically compatible department heads in government offices. However, he stressed, that does not apply to the Employment Service, which is a national, non-political body.

Kessar and the other speakers maintained that Katzav's proposed replacement of Haklai and of other senior workers by outsiders was an infringement of advancement procedures within the service.

The Labour Party has also taken up the cudgels on behalf of Haklai. Prime Minister Peres has been asked to refer the issue to a ministerial committee on appointments, and Agriculture Minister Arye Nehemkin has been ordered by the Labour ministers to replace Likud appointees under his jurisdiction if Katzav does not back down.

Avi Temkin adds:

Israel has to decide whether it wants its civil service to be built on the British model of a completely apolitical body, or on the American and German ones, where senior civil servants are allowed to be involved in party politics but serve under special contracts, Civil Service Commissioner Avraham Natan said yesterday.

He also said the present system is unhealthy and unviable.

Commenting on the row between the Likud and Alignment over the Labour Ministry appointments, he said the law empowers ministers to make certain appointments. "Since 1977 ministers have been increasingly dependent on members of their parties' central committees, and once they take office they are forced to appoint committee members to senior posts," he said. This situation must end, he stressed.

Natan said he had appointed a committee headed by Prof. Emmanuel Dror and including MKs Shevah Weiss and Dan Meridor to study the relations between party politics and the civil service.

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ISRAEL

DILUTED RACISM BILL PASSES INTO LAW

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 6 Aug 86 pp 1, 9

[Article by Aryeh Rubinstein]

[Text] Fifteen months after the government submitted its racism bill, the Knesset at midnight last night passed into law a revised bill with which no Knesset group was particularly happy.

The bill managed to unite the two main parties, but only after the Alignment agreed to the Likud's condition that the Alignment support the bill banning unauthorized contact with PLO leaders. That bill was due to be discussed immediately following racism bill.

The vote was 57 against 22, with seven abstentions.

All coalition members voted with the majority, save for Labour's Abdel Wahab Darousha and Shinui's Mordechai Virshubski.

Bizarrely, the majority was joined by Meir Kahane, the lone Kach MK, against whom the original bill was conceived.

Many opposition speakers during the debate cited Kahane's proclaimed intention to vote for the bill as evidence of its weakness.

Parliamentary observers felt Kahane meant his vote as a maneuver to embarrass the government and the sponsors of the bill.

The abstentions were cast by Shas and Agudat Yisrael, and by Tehiya members.

The National Religious Party joined the other coalition parties in voting for the bill, while a lone religious MK, Avraham Verdiger of the now defunct Morasha, voted against it.

Thus the opponents were a motley assortment: Darousha, Virshubski, Verdiger, and the entire left-of-centre opposition.

Several extended recesses succeeded in bringing the two major parties closer to the religious factions, but failed to make a dent in the opposition of Mapam and the smaller left groups. They maintained that the bill made a mockery of the government's professed determination to fight Kach MK Meir Kahane

The compromise which failed to appease the left opposition groups pertained to two paragraphs. The first tempered somewhat the earlier clause excluding from the law's scope the publication of the matter that aims to preserve the character or uniqueness of a religion.

The second change involves the case of a person in possession of racist material meant for distribution - a crime punishable by one year in jail. Here the clause in the original version, "with the object of promoting racism," was deleted.

However, a similar phrase has been retained in connection with the more serious crime of actually publishing racist matter. The penalty for this is five years imprisonment.

This key-phrase - imposing as it does a heavy burden of proof on the prosecution - is the main element which has watered down the racism law relative to its initial drafts formulated more than a year ago.

Earlier, when Kulas presented the bill for its second reading, he noted the three main changes the committee had made in the previous version of the bill:

First, the bill now requires intent to incite to racism, whereas under the previous version, the publication of something likely to incite racism constituted adequate grounds for prosecution.

Second, the definition of racism now speaks of the persecution, degradation, etc., of a group "on account of its colour, racial affiliation, or national-ethnic origin." The old definition was "...on account of its racial affiliation, nationality, *or religion*."

Third, a new clause was added that excludes from the scope of the law the publication of something "that aims at preserving the character, uniqueness or worship of a religion, provided that this was not done with the object of inciting to racism."

Kulas quoted former justice minister Moshe Nissim, who said, when he presented the bill in May 1985, that its main purpose was educational: to give clear expression to the Knesset's conviction that racism is not to be tolerated.

Passage of the bill would not greatly change the existing legal situation, Nissim had further said. Kulas agreed, adding that while the

bill would not solve all the problems presented by the Kahane phenomenon, it was "one layer in our fight against him and it."

It was important to pass the bill before the Knesset recessed, Kulas said, because of the baseless view that failure to do so would indicate a disinclination to act against racism.

Members who had registered minority amendments – mainly from the left opposition – then explained them. Shulamit Aloni (Citizens Rights Movement), for example, said that the change regarding "preserving the character of a religion" itself constitutes incitement to racism.

Kulas then requested that the vote be deferred to enable the Law Committee to meet, with the object of changing that clause and another, to achieve a greater consensus for the bill.

Speaker Shlomo Hillel then declared a one-hour recess, but it was only an hour and a half later that the House was reconvened, and then to debate other matters, since the Law Committee had not yet reached agreement.

When the Alignment's Abba Eban heard that Kahane intended to vote for the anti-racism measure, he said to *The Jerusalem Post*: "It's like Casanova voting for the Seventh Commandment."

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ISRAEL

RESULTS OF GABBAI, BEJSKI COMMISSIONS DISCUSSED

Jerusalem THE ISRAEL ECONOMIST in English No 6, Jul 86 p 10

[Article by Miriam Shenkar]

[Text] Israeli banks have been under close scrutiny following the October 1983 bank-share collapse. Two commissions recently addressed the banks' role in the Israeli capital market in the wake of the crisis. The Gabbai Commission was appointed by the Minister of Justice immediately after the crash and was charged with delineating, among other things, the status of banks and other entities acting as investment consultants in Israel's stock market. The commission issued its report in August 1985. The Bejski Commission was formed by the Knesset State Control Committee in early 1985, following State Comptroller Yitzhak Tunik's strongly worded demand in his 1984 report. The commission investigated a broad spectrum of activities leading to the October crash, and released its findings in April 1986. Each commission's recommendations follow.

The Gabbai Commission

After a one-year transition period, banks should be prohibited from providing investment counseling on securities, although they may continue their counseling regarding other financial assets, including time deposits, foreign-currency accounts, pension funds, and various savings plans. A bank employee dispensing such counseling must, however, be licensed and subject to all investment consultants' legal obligations. In addition, banks should not be prevented

from executing clients' orders to buy or sell securities on the stock market, nor should they be subordinated to any certification system in these transactions.

Banks should be permitted to establish investment-counseling companies. Some commission members felt that this arrangement should be permanent. Others advocated it as a five-year, renewable plan designed to separate investment counseling from the banking system gradually but completely. In any case, consultants employed in these firms would also require licenses and would be subject to all relevant obligations. The management of these companies — which would not trade securities on their own account — would be formed in a manner guaranteeing its independence from bank management. The firms would be supervised by the Bank of Israel and their consultants would be monitored by the Securities Authority.

The Bejski Commission

The banks should be barred from direct and indirect share trading (as opposed to investment) on their own behalf. Similarly, they should be prohibited from directly or indirectly managing trust funds that deal mainly or partially in shares, as well as from managing pension funds. Managers should instead be entirely independent of the banks, and should be supervised by the Securities Authority. Yet banks should be permitted to serve as trustees for the

purpose of holding pension-fund assets, and they should be allowed to continue mobilizing savings for these funds.

Banks should be forbidden to encourage consultants to urge the purchase of certain shares or even to inform them of bank preferences. There should be no information flow between the banks' counseling and other departments.

A law should mandate the licensing of consultants and govern their operations and responsibility.

The symposium

At the symposium, Dr. Meir Heth, chairman of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange during the bank-share crisis, criticized the recommendations. He insisted that conflicts of interest between various bank activities were unavoidable and that such conflicts exist in all financial firms. Separating bank activities has proven inefficient, he maintained, citing a recent US study. Dr. Heth preferred the Gabbai Commission's proposals, since they would permit banks to operate in the securities market through their own corporations, whereas the Bejski Commission favored complete bank withdrawal from the market. Dr. Heth also opposed the cessation of bank-managed trust funds, stating that it was possible to prevent a conflict of interest through less drastic means. Yet he supported the Bejski Commission's call for an end to bank participation in pension funds.

Bank representatives had harsher words for the symposium's audience. Nonetheless, Commissioner of Banks Galia Maor plans to implement some of the commissions' proposals. ■

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ISRAEL

TRADE, TOURISM DOWN COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS YEAR

Jerusalem THE ISRAEL ECONOMIST in English No 6, Jul 86 p 8

[Article by Lisa Rotter]

[Text] Commercial imports in the first half of 1986 increased 14%, compared with the same period last year; however, if the 29% plummet in oil imports is included in this calculation, the overall rate grew by only 6%. Consumer-good (durable) imports averaged \$75 million (\$30 million) per month in the year's second quarter, versus \$50 million (\$18 million) in the first quarter. June's \$763-million net imports included \$150 million in diamonds and \$70 million worth of fuel.

Demand for European and US imports is likely to grow starting January 1, 1987, when lower duty rates become effective. Levies on European goods will be reduced by 60%, to 4-6%. An annual \$200-million loss in tax revenue is expected.

Declining fuel prices contributed to the seasonally adjusted 19% fall in the commercial trade gap (excluding diamonds) between April and June, compared with the first three months of 1986. The commercial trade gap in the first half of 1986 was \$1.182 billion, reflecting net imports of \$4.445 billion and net exports of \$3.264 billion.

June exports totalled \$526 million: \$357 million from industrial goods, \$151 million from diamonds, and \$18 million from agricultural products. Seasonally adjusted, average exports for May-June dropped 8% below the previous nine months' figure. Industrial exports amounted to \$2.043 billion from January to June, a seasonally adjusted 2% fall from the second half of 1985. Specifically, food and beverages, metal and electronics exports decreased 6%, and plastics and rubber exports increased

7.5%. Strong European currencies and the FTA with the US expanded fashion exports by 30%. This year, some 34% of industrial exports will be shipped to the US; only 32% will go to the EEC.

Diamond exports were up 38% in the first half of 1986, to \$801 million; June's figures were 60% above those of June 1985, catapulting Israel into the leading production and export position. (Diamond imports in this period rose 55%). The \$1.5 billion in exports expected for 1986 will have a value addition of more than 20%. Industry and Trade Minister Ariel Sharon forecasts that diamond exports will reach \$2 billion in 1987. The number of factories increased by 4%, to 730, and the production workforce grew 9%, to 10,800.

Although diamonds accounted for \$796 million of the \$2.2 billion in Israeli exports to the US in 1985, this branch may lose its premier position as the metal, electrical, and electronics sectors gear up for bidding on US defense contracts.

Kibbutz industrial exports grew 19%, to \$96 million, in the first third of 1986 compared with January-April 1985, and constituted 7% of Israel's industrial exports. The 200 kibbutz industrial exporters have registered 25% annual increases in overseas sales for the past three years. Plastics and metals maintain their lead.

The FTA's influence will be felt this year as 120 Israeli exporters participate in US trade shows. Jewelers comprise the largest group, with 39 representatives attending various trade shows and fairs in Los Angeles, Dallas, Chicago, and

New York. Industry forecasts anticipate a \$25-million export increase in 1986, to \$185 million.

About 21 Israeli food exporters will also attend fancy-food shows throughout the US, and the industry hopes to surpass last year's \$50-million exports. Eight shoe exporters will be at the National Shoe of America show and 14 hardware exporters will be represented at the National Hardware show.

Growing sales

During this agricultural year (October 1985 to September 1986), exports are expected to reach \$720 million: \$540 million from fresh produce, which includes \$180 million from citrus, \$115 million from cotton and nuts, and \$105 million from flowers; and \$180 million from preserved goods. Poultry profitability problems are projected.

Lower cotton prices (47.5¢ per pound compared with 66.05¢ last year) and higher water costs (recycled water supplies two-thirds of irrigation needs) will reduce cotton fields by some one-third this year, to about 465,000 dunams. Cotton revenue is expected to pump some \$100 million into the economy.

Flowers will occupy 130,000 dunams this year, an annual 5% increase. Carnations are growing on 3,000 more dunams, and gypsophila acreage rose by 2,000. Fresh-flower exports to Scandinavia — particularly Sweden — blossomed by 40%, led by rose sales. Adverse weather in target markets, strong European currencies, and improved marketing should boost next year's exports by some 15% on a dollar basis.

Since the beginning of the year, the balance of trade has not improved. In response, a recent internal Treasury memorandum advocated a small devaluation that would narrow the deficit

without increasing wages. Meanwhile, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin warns that the frozen dollar and the 25-35% wage hikes over the past year have threatened the Israeli defense industry's export competitiveness.

Tourism: some bad news

Tourism from the US dropped by 59% in May, compared with May 1985, and the first six months of 1986 witnessed a 19% decrease in foreign visitors to Israel. Some 20% fewer tourists arrived in the year's second quarter, compared with the first three months, on a seasonally adjusted basis. Kibbutzim with guest accommodations are feeling the pinch: 21% of their revenues derive from this source and 35% of their labor force works in these guest houses. One night's lodging brings in about \$30.70.

Hoteliers claim their industry has become unprofitable as well. From July 1985 to April 1986, while expenses rose 46% nominally, dollar-based revenue grew only 30.2% nominally.

Despite the 20% rise in Israelis traveling abroad in June compared with June 1985, state revenues from the tax on foreign-currency purchases dropped by 48%. This radical decline is attributable to the lower black-market dollar rate. The exit tax yielded NIS10 million in June.

Import taxes in the first quarter of this fiscal year (April-June) grew a real 28% compared with the same period in 1985, totalling NIS503 million. In June, the NIS176-million import-tax collection was up a whopping real 76% over June 1985. In a 1985-86 quarterly comparison, the following imports increased: cars, 20%; washing machines, 18%; televisions, 129%; and videos, 133%. Refrigerator imports fell 25%. ■

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LIQUID-METAL MAGNETOHYDRODYNAMICS DEVELOPED AT UNIVERSITY

Jerusalem THE ISRAEL ECONOMIST in English No 6, Jul 86 pp 15-17

[Text]

A felicitous intersection of entrepreneurship and scientific trailblazing has resulted in the development and marketing of a new science: liquid-metal magnetohydrodynamics (LMMHD). Born less than 40 years ago, this innovative field deals with the extraction of energy from an electricity-conducting fluid passing through a magnetic field. The sole energy input, in the form of heat, drives the liquid-metal fluid, and the electricity generation is almost one-third more efficient than that obtainable conventionally.

The MHD Center at Ben-Gurion University

Professor Branover began working in MHD almost 30 years ago. After immigrating to Israel in the early 1970s, he introduced the concept in local engineering circles. Though other research centers have concentrated on plasma (hot gas) MHD systems, wherein hot gases are forced through the magnetic field, the Branover model involves liquid-metal-flow magnetohydrodynamics, or LMMHD power generation. Smaller groups are working in the field in the US, France, and Japan, but the major research is being conducted at the Center for Magnetohydrodynamic Studies at Ben-Gurion University in Beersheva. The Center employs 20 engineers, physicists, and technicians, and specialists in systems analysis and computer-code development and design.

The Center's financing and overall management are handled by Solmecs (Israel) Ltd. in Jerusalem, a subsidiary of the London-based Solmecs Corporation. Founded in 1980 to supply and manage venture capital for the energy-conversion field, Solmecs drafted specialists to research Prof. Branover's MHD invention and design application systems to be

marketed within a know-how package directed toward manufacturers, users, and contractors worldwide.

To date, over \$6 million have been invested in the LMMHD project, supplied by both Solmecs and the Israeli Ministry of Industry and Trade's matching grants. The original concept has been translated into a pre-industrial demonstration project that converts heat directly into electricity. Operating at the Center, the "optimized magnetohydrodynamic conversion cycle" (OMACON) is known as Etgar 3 (see photograph), following the earlier Etgar 1 and Etgar 2 designs. It was conceived by Prof. Branover and Dr. Michael Petrick of Argonne National Laboratory.

LMMHD: How it Works

In conventional systems, heat is converted into electricity in several ways. For instance, power stations commonly use a high-temperature source to boil water, creating the steam that operates an electricity-generating turbine. In the LMMHD set-up, liquid metal flows through a closed loop of pipes: the heat merely drives the liquid. An MHD system is adaptable to heat derived geothermally or from oil or coal burners, the sun, industrial waste, or a nuclear reactor. In Etgar 3, a boiler simulates any of the above potential energy sources.

The overall MHD apparatus has only a few major components -- the loop of pipes (20 centimeters in diameter), a heater, a separator, a mixer, and an MHD generator. The boiler produces heat and transfers it to the liquid metal inside the loop. As the liquid runs up the pipes and passes through the mixer, hot vapor from the mixer creates a two-phase fluid at a lower density than the totally liquid material ascending. Due to the difference in density between the ascending and descending fluids, natural circulation operates

inside the loop, pulling up the liquid metal against gravity.

At the top of the loop, a separator increases the system's efficiency by disengaging the liquid metal from the vapor. This separation leaves the higher-density liquid metal to complete its flow down through the MHD generator in the lower portion of the loop, where electricity is generated. Meanwhile, the electro-conductive liquid metal passes through a channel running between the pipe and a magnet surrounding it, and electrodes in the MHD generator extract the direct current (DC electrical power) without requiring any moving parts. The 97.5-kilowatt thermal input produces a temperature cycle of between 423°K and 338°K, while the system is effectively 7.5 meters high: the mass flow rate of the liquid metal is 435.2 kilograms per second, through a magnetic field of 0.73 teslas.

Laboratory research and development of the MHD system touched on a wide range of basic scientific questions that may some day help us understand astrophysical phenomena related to the structures of galaxies and solar energy. For now, however, the findings were directed toward applied technology within the MHD system. While researching MHD, it was necessary to study not only magnetohydrodynamics itself, but also two-phase flows, mixing and separation techniques, physico-chemical interphase phenomena, and chemical-compatibility rules. In addition, components were tested and an extremely sophisticated computer code was designed to optimize the system. The computer produced a model of the Etgar demonstration facility before it was built, and assists in the economic analysis of the results obtained and in forecasting the implications of large-scale commercial applications. The next stage is upgrading the successful, fully integrated working model to a multimegawatt power station.

Beyond the Lab

The Ben-Gurion University team is not alone in its enthusiasm about the MHD system's potential: feasibility studies have shown that large-scale operation and the production of several megawatts of energy should be economical and efficient. Other advantages of an MHD system include its reliability and simple maintenance. Like any MHD installation, Etgar 3 is a static assembly of pipes with no moving machinery — only the liquid metal flows through the sealed pipes.

Electricity generated and heat entering the system pass through the pipe walls, and without bearings or rotating turbines, MHD is well-suited to isolated areas, including outer space. Moreover, because of its structural simplicity, it is less expensive and easier to install than conventional power generators, aside from being readily adjustable to almost all heat sources.

But the bottom line in energy conversion to electricity, efficiency, is where MHD shines — it can generate up to 30% more electricity than an ordinary turbine generator with the same heat input. And when multiplied by the amount of fuel burned in power stations, even a nominal 5-10% efficiency increase translates into millions of dollars saved yearly. Since an MHD system can be modular, it can be connected in series to generate sufficient voltage for various uses. Additionally, module prefabrication for on-site assembly is a convenient and economic extension of the basic one-unit format, and up to 100-megawatt power stations are foreseeable.

Other feasibility studies are under way. A project in California is using solar energy to supply the heat input. Elsewhere researchers have reached the conceptual-design stage in their plans to employ low-pollution fluidized-bed combustion (whereby crushed coal is injected into a hot-air jet) to generate heat in northern Sweden.

The Branover-Solmecs team and Sweden's Studsvik laboratory plan to design and build a multimegawatt power plant that will generate electricity and hot water for district home heating, illustrating one of MHD's many applications in an isolated area. Canada is studying the use of an MHD plant to produce electricity through municipal-waste combustion, and feasibility surveys are in progress at Kvaerner Engineering, a Solmecs affiliate in England.

Perhaps MHD's most highly publicized application is in the American Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program, known as "Star Wars". In the first Israeli contract to be finalized within the SDI framework, the Branover group has been signed to apply MHD in space defense. Prof. Branover sees other outer-space possibilities as well. For example, inexhaustible solar energy collected by a satellite power station might be converted to electricity using a reliable, low-up-keep MHD system, and then beamed down to Earth.

The next generation of MHD projects may be off-shoots of the many contacts between the Ben-Gurion University MHD Center and, among others, the Argonne National Laboratory; California's Technology Engineering Center (which is associated with Rockwell International); Elscint, which is examining the potential of magnet components; and Westinghouse, which has expressed interest in power-conditioning devices for MHD systems. Although only 20 people (which itself constitutes large-scale research by Israeli standards) are directly involved in the MHD Center, the international cooperation means that there are many unseen players in the very promising field of MHD.

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LEBANON

SHAYKH SHA'BAN INTERVIEWED ON WAR, KIDNAPPINGS, ISLAMIC STATE

Abu Dhabi AL-ITTAHAD in Arabic 4 Jul 86 p 7

[Interview with Shaykh Sa'id Sha'ban, commander of the Islamic Unification Movement, by 'Assaf 'Abbud: "If the Conflict Continues, Lebanon Will Become a 'Second Palestine'; Kidnapping Is a Disgusting Crime, but Why Are the Muslims Accused and the Enemy Not Accused? We Have Not Thought About Establishing an Islamic State in Tripoli"; Beirut, date not given]

[Text] Shaykh Sa'id Sha'ban, commander of the Islamic Unification Movement, spoke to AL-ITTIHAD about Lebanon, the camps, coming dangers, and the Islamic state. He said: "The war taking place in the camps is a war against the Islamic world. The Lebanese problem is an intractable one that conflicting international and regional forces share in exacerbating."

Shaykh Sha'ban added: "America tried to enter Lebanon and establish itself, it and the Multinational Forces, but if found that its losses would be enormous; so it was forced to withdraw, leaving the contending parties in Lebanon to act as its proxy in finishing the fight against our nation through the militias allied with this or that state, this or that regime."

He warned that Lebanon would be a second Palestine, or that its fate would be that of al-Andalus [medieval Muslim Spain] if the conflict continued. "The war of the 'party kings' in al-Andalus caused the Muslims to be driven out. The war of 'party kings' in Lebanon today is on the verge of causing the Muslims to be driven out of Lebanon and of destroying hope for the return of Palestine." He noted that the Lebanese-Palestinian conflict is between Muslims and that the Sunni-Shi'ite conflict is also between Muslims. In the meantime, the Maronite sect has begun to form for itself in Lebanon the nucleus of a state supported from the Vatican, America, Israel, and the other European countries, just as everyone used to embrace the Jews in Palestine.

He said that the ordeal of Palestine began with the detachment of part of it, and then Israel made war on the Arabs to swallow other parts of the Arab world. Criticizing the Arabs who share in fanning the flames of sectarian conflict, he said: "The truth is that everyone will lose after having helped Israel and the enemy forces weaken the Muslims, divert the attention of the

Palestinian people from their cause, bring about the end of the Lebanese people, and destroy the Muslims in Lebanon. This will happen when the fire reaches our Arab neighbors, who left Lebanon and the Muslims in it to burn."

Shaykh Sa'id said: "Often we gave advice, saying that everyone who wanted to preserve Lebanon should preserve the Muslims in it and that when the Muslims are abandoned, it will be the end of the Muslims and the end of the Arabs' relationship with Lebanon." He added: "Imperialism does not covet just Lebanon or Palestine. If Israel has defined its 'state' as extending from the Nile to the Euphrates, imperialism covets the whole Islamic world and does not want to leave the Muslims a place on this earth."

Having reviewed the numerous wars that are draining the forces of the Islamic world and criticized their persistence and the fact that some people are feeding them (which can be considered a conspiracy against the Muslims), he said that it would be better for the fight with Israel to continue for 100 years than to be transferred to Beirut. He asked: "Can the Arabs stop the Beirut war, carry it into Israel, and open fronts against Israel?"

On the recent Damascus agreement to restore security to West Beirut and the camps, Shaykh Sha'ban said: "We are not against any agreement that brings calm to West Beirut and the camps. We hope the agreement leads to a halt in the fighting in the camps, but hopes are not always realized. The winds are all blowing opposite to what we want. Many agreements have been signed and have not borne the desired fruit."

He added: "The conspiracy was able to deepen the sectarian conflict. There is a faction of 'hooligans' between Sunni and Shi'ite who hold to no agreement. They are infiltrated among Sunnis and Shi'ites, among Palestinians and Lebanese. There is Israel, the Lebanese Second Office, and American and regional intelligence agencies. In every militia, organization, and party, they have their secret agents working to violate every cease fire as soon as there is a lull in the shooting. That is because the international decision is that the fighting should not stop until all the contending Muslims are finished off."

Shaykh Sha'ban advised Lebanese Muslims to realize that the fight they are sharing in exacerbating is against all of them.

On kidnappings, Shaykh Sa'id said: "We know that kidnapping is a contemptible action and a very disgusting crime." He asked: "But why are the Muslims accused of kidnapping? Why isn't the enemy accused of kidnapping Muslims?" And he said: "Everyone knows that Palestine was kidnapped, but the world has not become upset until now. All of Lebanon was kidnapped, and the world powers did not defend it. There are 2,200 people who have been kidnapped by the Christian side from Beirut, and the world has not become upset. Aren't they innocent? Why are Islamic quarters accused of kidnapping? Why not accuse the infiltrated elements within the Islamic ranks of kidnapping to provoke a crisis? In my view, they are agents of the enemy; they plot and they kidnap. Some of the secret agents who kidnap have been proved to be working with Mosad, like some of those who were executed in Beirut. Some of

them are involved in bombings. The recent kidnappings in Beirut were the doing of these agencies to paint an ugly picture of the Muslims and to justify their strike, just as they struck Libya."

Accusing Washington, Shaykh Sha'ban said that it is behind the game of inflaming and escalating terrorism. "The Arabs should not believe that terrorist actions in Kuwait are the doing of Muslim hands. We should not believe it, because the conspiracy is against all Muslims and Arabs, but with foreign planning and execution by client hands."

Concerning some people's accusation that the Unification Movement has in the past tried to make Tripoli's Christians leave and has tried to establish an Islamic state in Tripoli, he said: "When we all become of one kind, the problem of civil strife will end in Lebanon. By 'one kind,' I do not mean that all should become Muslims. I mean that we should come to have one policy, aimed at preserving Lebanon, Palestine, and the Arab and Islamic countries."

Shaykh Sha'ban accused the forces conspiring against Lebanon of having infiltrated their elements into Tripoli to provoke civil strife. He said: "Had there not happened in Tripoli what is happening today in Beirut, Tripoli would be a splendid model for all Lebanon. Into Tripoli they pushed their agents who change their skin every day, and these practiced their worst devices until they provided a justification for striking Tripoli."

He added: "That we want to establish an Islamic state in Tripoli is no indictment. It is not in Tripoli that we thought to establish an Islamic state; we want an Islamic state to arise in the whole Islamic world. Islam is what saved and united the Arabs, and it also united them with the Persians. It created them from nothing. This is the Islam that we are striving to make God's law that rules our lives. We want to bring Islam to the world because our prophet Muhammad, son of 'Abdallah (may God bless him and grant him peace), came 'as a mercy unto all beings [Koran 21:107].' He was not sent as a mercy to the tribe of Quraysh or to the Arabs of the peninsula. We hold that every Muslim country ought to dream of this hope in order to realize an Islamic society. This is a great honor; it should not be called an indictment, as it is by the foreigners of infidels who are enemies of Islam."

Concerning his view of a solution for the Lebanese crisis, Shaykh Sa'id said: "From our Islamic point of view, we think that if man returns in Lebanon to his original nature and to his human trustworthiness, and if he departs from external influences and studies his evil state remote from the pressures, it might bring him to the conviction that everyone is losing. But the Lebanese leave not a single moment for thought." "Everyone is required to struggle; no one is permitted to submit." He called on all the Lebanese to overcome their subservience.

Shaykh Sha'ban said he believed the influence of Syria and Iran on Lebanon to be great. He added: "We hope Syria and Iran will coordinate their

efforts and get Lebanon out of this ordeal." Turning to the Syrians, he said: "They must know that justice is the foundation of authority and that Lebanon must be in equilibrium as a whole. I have advised our Syrian brothers to work on uniting the Muslims first. The Christians will not be a problem after all the Muslims unite. By virtue of the power of the Muslims of Lebanon, the Christians will come to accept the local solution that the region approves. As for the conflict being kindled in Lebanon between the Palestinians and the Lebanese and between Sunnis and Shi'ites, I believe Syria is responsible for part of it. Syria must therefore help us out of this conflict. It must not adopt one faction and strike at another. This is for the sake of Syria's interest in the future and for the sake of future relations between Syria and the Muslims in Lebanon. Having the power for a solution, a power that has been granted internationally, Syria must take up this role for the welfare of the Muslims, the Arabs, and the Christians."

Turing again to Yasir 'Arafat, Shaykh Sa'id said: "I say to 'Arafat: 'Do not return to Beirut to fight Syria or to fight the Shi'ites. Our fight as Sunnis and Shi'ites, is against the Jews and America. Our Syrian brothers must unite the Palestinians, for they are brothers of all the Palestinians, not just of a group. It is a sin for the fighting at the camps to continue.'"

Replying to a final question about the economic crisis, he said that the plot against the Lebanese pound is part of the machinery of war and that the game of the dollar in Lebanon was one of the most dangerous wars ever launched against the people, especially against the Muslims, since those who hold dollars in Lebanon are primarily the Christians. After everyone's failure to stop the war of steel and fire, this war, the war of the dollar, has become the final trick, one that might bring everyone to his knees. He called for an Arab initiative to feed the Muslim poor in Lebanon.

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LEBANON

POLITICAL FIGURE DISCUSSES DAMASCUS MEETINGS, BEIRUT SITUATION

London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Jul 86 p 6

[Interview with President of the Islamic Goals Society Tammam Salam, by Zuhayr Mansur: "The Purpose Of the Damascus Meetings Was To Impose Limits On Those Controlling Beirut;" date and place not specified]

[Text] President of the Islamic Goals Society Tammam Salam is the son of former Prime Minister Sa'ib Salam, who has figured prominently on the Lebanese political scene ever since independence. As short while ago Tammam Salam entered the political arena, becoming a political figure who because of his influence cannot be ignored. Following the Damascus meetings on ending the security lapses in West Beirut, President al-Jumayyil's Gulf trip, the Phalangist Party elections, and the political and security problems in West Beirut, we met with Tammam Salam to discuss all these matters. During this special meeting he spoke in detail about the war of the camps and King Fahd bin 'Abd-al-'Aziz's recent emotional appeal to the Lebanese people. The interview was as follows.

[Question] About a year ago in Damascus, decisions were reached which were similar to those made recently after the national Islamic meeting on the deteriorating situation in West Beirut. Do you think that these decisions can save Beirut and put an end to these lapses?

[Answer] We hope so. We would like nothing better than for everyone to commit themselves to what has been agreed to in Damascus, thus giving it a better chance of being carried out here in Lebanon, so that the results which the citizens hope to gain from stability and security, which are the natural outcome of the national accord process, can be achieved. However, it seems that things will not be that easy. We wonder why the meetings were held in Damascus, since they were national political meetings intended to straighten out the deteriorating conditions in Beirut itself and restore normality on the level of security and stability. There were two groups which met in Damascus. The first one complains and shouts about what is happening to the country, yet expresses the feelings of the overwhelming majority of the people, who

want a decent, respectable way of life. The other group represents those who control the situation through the armed militias, and are the primary cause of the lapses and instability.

The officials in Damascus are trying their best to throw in their weight to help achieve a reconciliation between the two parties, coming out with resolutions in the interest of the citizens and of Beirut in general. In the past, we have appealed to Syrian officials, and several times directly to Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, to come to Beirut and stay with us for a while in order to observe the actual situation at close hand and to experience the unfortunate situation--instead of being content with just listening to the groups which come so often to Damascus to get aid so they can continue with what they are doing. They may reach an agreement in Damascus and return to Beirut, but the excesses continue and the militia attacks do not stop. Some attempts, purely formal ones in my opinion, have been made to resolve the situation, but under the best of circumstances such attempts last only a short time. We must frankly recognize that in the absence of a legitimate authority agreed upon by all parties and nationally accepted, the militias will continue to do whatever they like, and plans for partition will persist here and there. Once the militias and their leaders lose their support, they will lose the trust of the people.

The Resignation of the Head of State and the Government

[Question] A few days ago, Prime Minister Rashid Karami called for the simultaneous resignation of the president and the cabinet. Do you think that this suggestion might lead to a possible solution for escaping this dilemma of government?

[Answer] This was an interim political suggestion, and was not serious. If we want to be realistic in evaluating the circumstances, we must recognize that the government as a whole is non-existent--it has ipso facto resigned. It is not playing its part as it should, because it is fragmented and divided, even though it has been termed a national federation government. Whenever there are contact lines between its ministers, it becomes paralyzed. It has lost its ability to play its national role. Therefore, the president of the republic is gradually turning into a fixed symbol of Lebanese legitimacy. In the absence of a government, all legitimate powers, especially foreign relations, come together in him. Thus I don't see any use in what Prime Minister Karami is calling for. Since a definite end must be put to this bitter situation, let Prime Minister Karami and his government resign, since under his government we are faced with a crisis of legitimacy and constitutionality. We can see what is coming, and as I see it there is no use in calling for anyone else's resignation.

The War Of the Camps

[Question] What do you think of the fighting and the battles around the Palestinian camps, which have been going on intermittently for more than a year? How do you explain them? Can the existing solutions, which have presumably begun now, guarantee results?

[Answer] As I see it, the war of the camps is an extremely advanced living and practical embodiment of wars and battles outside our homeland of Lebanon, the price of which our Lebanese people are paying. Only the Zionist enemy benefits from these wars. However, I don't think that we are the ones who decide under which circumstances or conditions they are to flare up or stop. This is a decision made overseas. The war of the camps is also a living example of how Lebanon and the Lebanese have gotten involved in international conflicts. Today, after 11 years of civil war, you must agree with me that Lebanon has been greatly weakened. therefore, it is not difficult to presume upon it and subject it to plots and plans outside its command, as is the case now. Lebanon could also be subjected to positive, national and beneficial forces if these outside forces so desired.

The Phalangist Elections

[Question] A new head of the Phalangist Party, George Sa'adah, was recently elected in East Beirut. Do you think that this development in East Beirut will have an effect on the progress of national accord?

[Answer] Perhaps, depending on the election results, the new personalities elected, and how they work and deal with the other parties. The Phalangist Party has no doubt passed through very difficult times recently, which have almost wiped out everything it had accomplished over the past 50 years. However, these elections seem to have given a new impetus to the party. I say this with complete objectivity. We hope that an accord with the latest team will lead to accord among all Lebanese.

The Standard of Living Crisis

[Question] The current economic crisis threatens to transform Lebanon into a country of famine. What dangers might result from this cancer in the economy and the way of life?

[Answer] In modern history, have you ever heard of any country subjected to several years of civil war which has not experienced negative effects from such war in all aspects of life, including the economy? It is not strange that the economy should decline and the value of the Lebanese pound drop today. We cannot ignore the extent to which Lebanon's agricultural and industrial production is dropping off, or the illegal ports which deprive the state treasury of customs revenues, or the decline of the service sector. The negative aspects of all these factors are piling up, and today we are seeing their effects on the standard of living. As I see it, if conditions continue as they are, we may perhaps face even more difficult economic circumstances. In this context, I must also say that the Lebanese have to give up their luxuries, cut back on their life style, and be aware of the dangers they will face in the future.

Compulsory Absence

[Question] It is said that Former Prime Minister Sa'ib Salam will return soon, after an absence of several years which has left a big vacuum on the political and national scene. Was this absence due to the ascendancy of the language of weapons and the decline of the language of words?

[Answer] Everyone knows that Sa'ib Salam left his country for certain family reasons related to his wife's health, which required him to accompany her and stay near her. Nevertheless, on many occasions Former Prime Minister Salam has stated that he would not hesitate a single moment to take part in any activity which had a serious chance of saving Lebanon. He has also said many times that at present he is not convinced that any serious, positive steps are being taken towards solving the problems and saving Lebanon.

King Fahd's Appeal

[Question] What do you think of King Fahd's heart-to-heart appeal to the Lebanese people?

[Answer] I have already expressed my opinion of this appeal; it was published in your newspaper a while ago, and I shall repeat it now. I want to stress the significance of King Fahd's remarks, considering his well-intentioned Arab and international stands, as well as his and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's special regard for the Lebanese, since for many years Saudi Arabia has shown concern for Lebanon and the Lebanese people and has given them assistance and aid. If the various groups would read and listen well to what King Fahd said, they might be guided by his words, weigh his remarks, and act intelligently, wisely and deliberately in dealing with our crisis. On the other hand, we ask that King Fahd adopt more of those correct, national and patriotic stands recognized by himself and previous leaders of Saudi Arabia and the Arab world, so that together we can attain better objective national circumstances than our present ones. In the vast ocean surrounding us, surely everyone in Lebanon, on the general popular level, is pleased with King Fahd's statement and pins great hopes on it in these dark and difficult times. May God grant him a long life and give him the strength, knowledge and awareness to continue bearing his vast responsibilities during this difficult phase in the history of our Arab nation.

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LEBANON

PHALANGE CHIEF INTERVIEWED ON PARTY VIEWPOINT

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 4 Jul 86 pp 12-13

[Interview with Dr Jurj Sa'adah, Phalange Party chairman, by Sharbal Zughayb:
"The Three-party Agreement Has Not Obtained Christian or Islamic Support;
Phalange Party Chairman Jurj Sa'adah: 'We Are Ready for a Salvation Agree-
ment Without Hegemony'"]

[Text] Parliamentary deputy Dr Jurj Sa'adah opened up his complete policy dossier for the coming period following his election as chairman of the Phalange Party.

In his comprehensive interview with AL-HAWADITH, Dr Sa'adah gave details about many aspects of the Lebanese crisis, past, present, and future. He gave attention to such important subjects as the fate of the salvation formulas, relations with Syria and the Palestinians, and the Israeli occupation presence in the South.

Sa'adah began the interview by replying to a question about talk concerning the Phalange elections and the jockeying for the office of party chairman. Some people have seen these as manifestations of political conflict within the party.

Dr Sa'adah said:

"Many statements and commentaries accompanied the Phalange elections, but all these were outside the Phalangist domain. Whoever wrote question marks and bet on a split certainly does not know Phalange history or the amount of democracy that characterizes the party. Some people thought that the slogan "the Phalange is a democratic communitarian party" was merely a slogan aimed at pleasing people. They have not learned that the Phalange really means what it says. They do not know that when the Phalange began, it did so not merely on the basis of written doctrines and public principles. Rather, the Phalangists lived their Phalange life in its various aspects, community and democratic. After a time, the Phalange doctrine was derived from the Phalange manner of living, especially that of the founders among them, with Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil in the forefront.

"As for how I am going to deal with prominent party figures and with the party base, I believe that these dealings will be like those of the head with the members of the body or a brother's dealings with his brothers. The Phalange has lived in this way for 50 years in a state of love uniting its members. As for the phrase, "prominent figures" within the party, I will work hard to have no prominent figure except that of the party and to have every existing prominent figure flow into the great stream that constitutes the party."

[Question] But this diplomatic answer, Mr Chairman, cannot cover over the struggle that has been taking place on the ground between the Lebanese Forces and the Phalange, as indicated by the fact that these elections have in a way "militarized" the Political Bureau. How, then, will the new chairman work to create harmony between the Forces and the Phalange?

[Answer] There is absolutely no conflict between the Forces and the Phalange. If there were a conflict, I would absolutely not accept being an instrument of that conflict. As is known about me in Phalangist circles, I am under obligation to the party line and to nothing else. Consequently, I am remote from the politics of conflicts and axes within the party, if there are any axes. What necessitated my nomination to the party chairmanship was the nonexistence of any conflict within the Phalange. There were signs on the horizon that the fight was going to be fierce; this made some people in the party fear that it would entail negative consequences, so they proposed to nominate me as a candidate of reconciliation, and I entered the fray on that basis. Initially, the names of Dr Samir Ja'ja' and Dr Ili Karamah had been proposed as candidates for a fight. In the end, however, Dr Ja'ja' was persuaded by the principle of a candidacy of reconciliation. He withdrew on this basis, and the fight narrowed to one between former party chairman Dr Karamah and a candidate of reconciliation. Divine providence wanted the party to demonstrate that its slogans are not hollow and that they emanate originally from the reality in light of which they live, namely, true democracy.

[Question] The subject of the presidency of the republic is continually raised whenever there is talk about the Phalange, because of his involvement in decisionmaking, appointments, and even general party policy. What will President al-Jumayyil's role within the Phalange Party be in the new period?

[Answer] President al-Jumayyil has enough to occupy him in the presidency of the republic and needs someone to support him in the political circumstances through which the country is passing. From this angle, the party has no relation to the president of the republic. Nevertheless, the party's relation to him is strong, very strong, through the political positions that the party holds as convictions. Since its inception, the Phalange has had the policy of supporting the presidency of the republic, because we consider the presidency to be the foremost guarantee of Lebanon's permanent existence.

[Question] Where, then, do you differ with President al-Jumayyil?

[Answer] In political positions, it is not possible for us to determine in advance where we agree and where we differ. There are positions that we announce, and there are others that he takes. In light of each position, matters are submitted to the Political Bureau, which makes the appropriate decision.

[Question] The principle of a democratic free election, as you call it, and as was applied in the Political Bureau elections--will it be applied generally to the regions and precincts?

[Answer] The party brought up this subject years ago; it is not a new one. We held a retreat at Brumana 15 years ago to discuss the subject, and opinions about it differed widely. Afterwards, we set out to ask the opinion of the party base about the idea of employing elections at the precinct and regional levels. At that time, the principle in operation was to restrict elections to the president of the party, his deputy, and the members of the Political Bureau.

Recently, a committee was formed, and it proposed broad guidelines on the subject of elections. When the Political Bureau, headed by Dr Karamah, studied the proposals, it decided to approve only the point relating to the formation of the Political Bureau, because we were on the verge of elections. The remaining points, including the election of district chairmen by the precinct chairmen, will be the subject of discussion and study in the meetings of the new Political Bureau, although one should bear in mind the fact that the committee did not deal with the subject of the election of precinct chairmen by the members within each precinct.

[Question] At times, the Phalange has been an obstacle to Christian-Christian reconciliation for reasons having sometimes to do with the Phalange and sometimes with the others. Will the new party chairmanship take practical steps in this direction?

[Answer] The Phalange has not been a stumbling block to any accord, neither to a Christian accord nor to a Lebanese accord. Our decisions, our pronouncement, our daily activity, our indefatigable efforts, and our repeated contacts with all parties are the best indications of this. The Phalange believes in dialogue, contacts, and openness. In the past, it was always the first to open up to the other side. In 1943, had the Phalange not opened up and talked to the others, Lebanese independence probably would have been somewhat delayed.

[Question] Since 1975, the Phalange has maintained its grip on the Christian political street. Will the Phalange allow the democracy that it pipes and drums about within the party to spread its contagion into the Christian street?

[Answer] I do not believe in these slogans and expressions: "maintaining its grip," "hegemony," and "monopoly on decisionmaking." All these slogans are uttered by people who have failed to play their part. Believing that there was a conspiracy against Lebanon, the Phalanage opposed it. If there is a faction that did not oppose it as we did, and that was content to have us oppose it, then today that faction should not be saying that the Phalanage monopolized decisionmaking and exercised hegemony over the Christian street. The best indication of the Phalange's good intentions is the fact that from the first moment of the outbreak of the Lebanese war, fearing that such statements would be aimed at us, we opened the way for everyone to have the glory of defending Lebanon's honor. The Phalange did this when it founded the Lebanese Forces, which are not restricted to Phalangists, although the overwhelming majority of the Forces belong to the Phalange.

On the political level, the Phalange Party participated in creating the Lebanese Front. If some politicians, for private considerations, did not join this front, it is not the Phalange's fault.

[Question] After the vertical split in the country between Christians and Muslims, the Phalange stood at the center of the Christian front. Today, under the new administration of the Phalange, how will dealings with the Muslim street be?

[Answer] It is a rather overblown expression to talk in the absolute sense of "dealings with the street." There are sincere Islamic and Christian leaderships and commands. First, we have to stop accusing each other. We have to rise to the level of patriotic responsibility, for what has afflicted Lebanon has afflicted all the Lebanese, and any commander or official conscious of his responsibilities knows that the problems in Lebanon will not be solved through force. We must all agree that there is no authority but the authority of the state, and that the mini-states that have been created have started eating each other up, and doing so at the expense of the country as a whole. This is what is really happening in the western sector of Beirut.

Today, I am addressing an invitation to everyone so that we can meet away from the sensitivities and the domestic or foreign pressures to discuss in depth the future of Lebanon and the future of the rising generation. About what is the dispute? Is it, as is generally accepted and proclaimed, about political and constitutional reforms which each of us extravagantly proposes? There are accepted principles and particular circumstances that must be taken into consideration. Beyond that, however, we are ready for any dialogue and for any agreement that would rescue us from the state in which we are fumbling.

[Question] But there have been several agreements proposed during the Lebanese war, beginning with the Constitutional Charter and ending with the Christian proposal. In between, there were the 14 Principles, the Parliamentary Charter, and the Three-party Agreement, which was the most important of all these agreements but which was not the treatment to cure the Lebanese crisis. How does the Phalange Party chairman view a solution that would save Lebanon?

[Answer] We had a share in and gave our approval to the Constitutional Charter, the 14 Principles, and the Parliamentary Charter. If they were not implemented, that is not attributable to us or because of us. Today, if you were to gather all the solution papers that have been offered and to analyze and sift through them, you would find that over 90 percent of their articles coincide among themselves, even if the expressions change or differ from document to document. The disagreement that remains is about simple points. Lebanon is a country in which different sectarian communities live together. We must finally root out the idea of the hegemony of one community over the others, and we must firmly establish the coexistence that exists between the Lebanese sectarian groups. We must balance the positions given to the religious groups in the state and abandon the idea of stripping any position of its powers. Possibilities for a solution are present because the intentions are sincere--if the conspiracy has reached its end.

[Question] The Three-party agreement was the straw that broke the back of Syrian-Phalange relations. How are you going to view relations with Damascus, and will you take serious and practical steps in this area?

[Answer] There was no mutual accord or near unanimity about the Three-party Agreement, as some try to picture it, either in the Christian political street or in the Islamic street. There were negative announced positions toward it, and there were positive announced positions accompanied by un-announced objections to many things in the text of its articles. Had the Three-party Agreement obtained near unanimity, it would not have been named the "Three"-party Agreement. It represents only a particular faction of the Lebanese.

As for relations between the Phalange and Syria, it is true that the Three-party Agreement threw them into disorder. The reason is that Syria officials were saying to us, and to me personally, that Syria would be equidistant from all the Lebanese factions. Today, we ask Syria only to be as it said it would be.

[Question] There is American and European pressure on Lebanon to agree to security arrangements in South Lebanon with Israel. How does the head of the Phalange view the role of Israel in the Lebanese crisis, especially in the Christian political street, and therefore how does he view the subject of security arrangements?

[Answer] "The role of Israel in the Christian street" is a statement that must be rejected. With reference to its geographical situation, Israel--and I am not making accusations--has more of a relation with many other political streets than it has with some Christian "streets." We must stop accusing each other, and we must be frank in political dealings. That is the basic principle of the Phalangist school. Israel is present in the South and is occupying a large part of Lebanon. If we want to rid the South of the Israeli occupation, we have two options and no third: Either by means of a war in whose outbreak the Arabs share, or by means of specified arrangements. I will not go into the details of these. The main goal toward which we are striving is the liberation of the South. The means are not the thing; we can differ about them. We can study them and arrive at a reasonable solution in the end.

[Question] What is the Phalange Party chairman's position concerning the boycott within the government and the call for mass resignation?

[Answer] The head of the government provides for himself with respect to resignation. The constitution is clear in this area: either the government resigns, or the parliament withdraws its confidence from it, or the president of the republic dismisses it. Concerning the resignation of the president of the republic, the constitution is also clear insofar as the president is elected for a 6-year term. We favor the president of the republic, any president of the republic, completing his term. The crisis did not begin with the current president so that we should hold him responsible for it. Three presidents have passed through it. In each one's term, we have heard the same tune, although people knew that the president's term would naturally end without an end to the crisis.

[Question] There is much talk about some kind of Christian-Palestinian alliance. What truth is there in this talk, especially after the Christians have been accused of aiding the Palestinians in the war of the camps?

[Answer] We are baffled by our allies. Again and again, in order to clear the way for inflexible stands against us, they classify us with this or that alliance. Our constant alliance is with Lebanon and the interest of Lebanon. Before the events of 1975, we tried and held joint meetings between the Palestinians and us through joint committees, of which I was a member. We tried to convince the Palestinians not to interfere in Lebanese affairs and not to set out from Lebanon to conduct military operations against Israel. We had the foresight to see that what would happen would bring us to the pass we have reached.

Not content with contacting the Palestinians, we created an assistant general secretariat for Arab affairs, which was vested in me personally. I made tours of the Arab capitals to prepare for a Phalange visit by party delegations headed by Shaykh Pierre al-Jumayyil to explain the Lebanese problem and to do away with the accusations that were raised against us without any justification, just to keep us in the prisoner's dock. We believed that if we made Arab moves, we would be met with welcome on the part of the domestic factions. But the opposite occurred. This means that they do not want the Phalange to open up. We do not forget that the destruction and ruin in Lebanon happened because of the armed Palestinian presence on our soil. Not for a moment were we against an unarmed Palestinian presence in Lebanon. Indeed, we were for the Palestinians when they were in their camps and homes. However, when they turned the camps into military camps, we turned against them because what we had been on guard against was what we got into.

As for alliances, we do not make an alliance with anyone except when we find that the welfare of Lebanon is insured by that alliance.

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LEBANON

ILLEGAL PORTS' FUTURE IN DOUBT, FINANCIAL DRAIN CITED

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[Article: "The Causes Are Many, the Hunger Is the Same--Illegal Ports Drain off Money to the Last Penny"]

[Text] President Amin al-Jumayyil was surprised by a demonstration conducted by some women who marched to the Presidential Palace demanding that the state move to treat the economic and social crisis. Shaykh Amin heard strong words from the women, the gist of them being that the country had come to the point of hunger--in fact, not just in word.

Three days later, a demonstration in Tripoli marched calling for the downfall of "those who led us into this famine" and demanding treatment of the situation pertaining to the means of subsistence "before it is too late."

These two demonstrations were the beginning of what could be called "the popular revolution" that Minister Nabih Birri predicted in February of this year. However, those who marched in the two demonstrations spared no one their accusations, beginning with the banks and speculators on the Lebanese pound and ending with the president and the ministers.

The two demonstrations were preceded by newspaper campaigns against the contending parties that had brought Lebanon into its present terrible collapse in standards of living. This was considered to be a development of sorts in understanding the causes of the crisis in standards of living, for in the past (at the beginning of this year, to be exact) all the accusing fingers had been pointed only at the banks as the moving force behind the collapse in the exchange rate of the Lebanese pound.

The more talk there was about the expected "popular revolution," the more the flight of capital abroad increased. Capital may coexist with a country dominated by war and tribal concepts, but it flees the moment it hears that the hungry are going to make a revolution that will burn both the green and the dry.

Relying on informed political sources, AL-HAWADITH can confirm that economic and social worries dominated the meetings of prominent Islamic figures in

Damascus, and that everyone saw the security situation in terms of economic conditions having to do with the level of subsistence, not in terms of the perhaps intentionally exaggerated sectarian conflicts. These sources, which also work in the economic field, say that one of the most important decisions issued by the latest Damascus meeting was for a halt to the seizure of apartments and private property and a revival of state utilities and agencies in order to restore confidence in the real estate sector on the part of Lebanese working abroad. It should be mentioned here that the real estate sector of the Lebanese economy qualified to attract billions of dollars, now and in the future, and that might support the exchange rate of the Lebanese pound and invigorate the remaining sectors of the economy--as these sources say. In fact, the in-flows of money invested in the real estate sector in 1982 were estimated at approximately \$750 million, most of it coming from the Arab and the African countries.

As the crisis worsens, the General Labor Confederation is increasingly moving to put pressure on officials to revive the government and public utilities as a way to begin solving the economic and social crisis. "But what impedes our efforts is the sectarian fever that has inflicted heavy losses on the working class. Whenever we are on the threshold of a working-class action, something happened that made us relapse into the fever. But I think the Lebanese people today are more aware of their interests than they were previously." The statement is by Mr Ilyas al-Habr, president of the National Federation of Worker and Employee Unions.

As concern treatments for the crisis, after the exchange rate of the Lebanese pound touched 45 pounds to the dollar, neither the state nor the Bank of Lebanon nor the Association of Banks came out with anything to halt this decline in the value of the currency on which the Lebanese people depend for livelihood. However, there was issued what one might consider an important indicator to complement the suggestions and indications emanating from the Damascus Islamic meeting: an announcement by the Lebanese Forces of their readiness to return the ports they exploit to the state.

Experts and observers divided into two groups. The first thinks that the Damascus economic decisions and the announcement by the Lebanese Forces come as a result of pressures to which the contending factions are subject domestically (i.e., from public opinion) and from abroad (i.e., from Syria and the ambassadors of several countries, including the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Vatican), and that the goal is to revive the Lebanese state and preserve its assets.

The other group says that the Damascus economic and security decisions and the announcement by the Lebanese Forces will be translated into reality only if there is an announcement of an end to the Lebanese war or if the fuel of the war runs out. This view is held by a large number of bankers and businessmen and by everyone who has been burnt by past experience.

If the new security plan emerging from the Damascus meeting carries a number higher than 10, any new attempt to restore the state ports and utilities

will be number 5. The first attempt was in 1979, when former Prime Minister Salim al-Huss proposed state control of any coast, i.e., the ports. This proposal, for which there was a consensus of parliamentary support, almost reached discussion of implementation, except that there were last-minute obstacles.

The second attempt occurred when the Council of Ministers in 1983 issued a legislative decree enjoining the army to prevent any ship from entering territorial waters unless it was headed for the one legal port--Beirut, at that time. This decision led to the state's successfully increasing its annual income from customs duties from 500 million Lebanese pounds to more than 4.2 billion Lebanese pounds. In fact, state revenues from customs duties between February 1983 (the date the decision went into force) and August amounted to over 2.2 billion Lebanese pounds. But at the end of 1983, "Halimah went back to her old ways."

The third attempt was at the end of October 1984, when the Council of Ministers, which was then in its best state, made decisions to reclaim the legal and illegal ports with the consent of all the factions. This decision was in force for a time, but then the state's hold on the ports disintegrated.

The fourth attempt was at the beginning of 1985, when the state, suddenly remembering that it was a state, formed a "chamber of operations" composed of the Lebanese Navy, the customs, the Ministry of Works, and others to stop and sink any ship entering any port other than Beirut. Immediately, the "mafias," which had been pushed out of the port, extended their sway over the customs of the port of Beirut and began to impose their private customs duties on manifests of goods. So the situation got out of hand again. It should be mentioned in this context that both the Lebanese Air Force and the Navy intervened several times to halt the entry of ships into illegal ports. This policy, however, did not last, as it ran counter to the interest of all factions, including the legitimate government.

Now, it appears that Lebanon is getting ready to begin a new attempt to return the ports to the state, conditional upon there being an agreement to close all the illegal ports that exist along the Lebanese coast and to maintain the following legal ports: Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, Juniyah, and Tyre. There had been nine illegal ports: 'Akkar, Jubayl (used occasionally), Sal'ata, Dabiyah, Aqumarina, the fifth basin at the port of Beirut, al-Awza'i, Khaldah, and al-Jiyah. At the present time, all ports, legal and illegal, have come under the control of the militias.

The Finance Ministry has compiled a report on Lebanese port utilization showing that the low duties imposed by the militias on imported goods assure them, in the end, of revenues not exceeding 2 billion Lebanese pounds a year under the best circumstances and conditions. The report estimates that these revenues, if they had been collected in full according to the law, would have reached about 4.2 billion Lebanese pounds in 1983, 6.3 billion pounds in 1984, and about 4,125 million pounds in 1985, assuming calculation

of the customs dollar at the market price of 16.5 Lebanese pounds and not at the price fixed by the Council of Ministers (6 pounds). It should be noted that the last figure was calculated on the basis that 1985 imports were about one-third or one-fourth of 1981 imports. Had they been at the level of 1981 imports, customs revenues would have been about 12 billion Lebanese pounds.

Last week, experts and businessmen raised an outcry. Dr Fu'ad Abi Salih, chairman of the Industrialists' Association, emphasized the need for a meeting of the Council of Ministers to convince the ordinary citizen and the investor that Lebanon still exists. In his opinion, the crisis is essentially one of lost confidence in Lebanon and its future, and this moves people to leave Lebanon with their capital. The other measure that Dr Abi Salih calls for is the stimulation of the production sectors by extending long-term loans to them. He calls attention to the important fact that the value of industrial production at maximum capacity would amount to \$6 billion, and he says: "Imagine if industry were working at full capacity! What would the result be? The answer: an inevitable economic and financial improvement."

Dr Raymond Malat, a banker and financier, has called for a halt to waste in government spending and for devoting treasury bond revenue only to the financing of productive projects. He agrees with Dr Abi Salih's theory that the basic treatment is a psychological treatment to halt the flight of people outside the zone of the Lebanese pound; technical treatments would come afterwards. While voices cry out demanding a psychological and technical treatment, the Bank of Lebanon's reserves of foreign currencies other than gold continue to decrease. At the end of this May, they amounted to \$468 million, a decrease of \$18.6 million. The bank, it should be known, has financed state fuel purchases approaching \$40 million. This means that the Central Bank entered the discount market, buying at least \$20 million, which increased the decline of the Lebanese pound.

Nearly every bank and banker in Beirut have become a currency exchange in its own right, where savers and people with money gather to follow the development in the prices of the Lebanese pound, buying and selling several times a day and sometimes realizing enormous gains. As for the Central Bank, it is considered to have stopped supporting the pound until further notice. In return, the number of people who gather at the refuse heaps scavenging whatever old rags, worn-out shoes, iron, copper, paper, cardboard, and empty bottles can be sold increases.

In spite of this, extremely optimistic pronouncements about the future of Lebanon have emanated from the president of the republic and some ministers and parliamentary deputies. Are these in the nature of tranquilizers for the mind and palliatives for the discount market and for the mounting demonstrations and calls for strikes?

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SYRIA

VOA STATION IN ISRAEL SAID PART OF STAR WARS PROGRAM

JN291916 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1530 GMT 20 Aug 86

[Palestine broadcast: "Talk of the Return"]

[Text] Brother strugglers: During his visit to occupied Palestine, U.S. Vice President George Bush signed an agreement with Zionist officials which will bring Israel closer to effective participation in the star wars program. This agreement is connected with building and using one of the most powerful radio stations in the world--a station which will be [words indistinct] the Voice of America.

This station is one of a series of stations which the Americans are building in Africa, the Middle East, Southwest Asia, and Southeast Asia. Last year, when the announcement about building the station was made, (Charley Drake), director of the American news agency [name and title as heard], said in a press statement that in addition to the powerful transmitters which will relay Voice of America programs, each station will have its own power generating center to ensure station operation in emergencies. The stations will have the needed antennas to ensure two-way link with satellites in space.

Earlier, the United States signed several agreements with the Zionist entity to ensure its continuing superiority over Arab states, as the United States believes. These agreements are signed within the framework of the U.S.-Israeli strategic alliance. They include the free trade agreement, which gives Israel the status of a preferred state in dealing with the United States and helps improve the Zionist entity's economic conditions. These agreements also include military pacts ensuring a continuous supply of sophisticated U.S. weapons to the Zionist entity for use in aggression against Arab states and agreements through which the United States can store weapons, ammunition, and medical equipment to be used in emergencies. There are also many other economic, financial, and political agreements which serve joint U.S.-Israeli interests in the Middle East.

Last but not least, the United States signed an agreement which includes Israel in the U.S. star wars program. This was followed by the agreement signed by Bush and Zionist officials with the aim of building one of the most powerful radio stations in the world in the Zionist entity to Israel could closely participate in the U.S. star wars program--something which

enhances its aggressive power and encourages it to commit more acts of aggression against Arab countries and the occupied territory.

Thus, the strategic U.S.-Israeli cooperation extends from the land, sea, and air to outer space. Undoubtedly, this close cooperation encourages the Tel Aviv rulers to adhere to their aggressive, expansionist stands. The signing by George Bush of an agreement to build one of the most powerful radio stations in the world in the Zionist entity for use in the star wars program shows the United States is still determined to support Israeli stands on a Middle East settlement. Thus, the United States again demonstrates its absolute bias in favor of Israel and its aggressive, expansionist policy against the Arab nation, the Palestinian cause, and the Palestinian people's rights.

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CSO: 4400/274

SYRIA

PRODUCTION OF IRON, STEEL LAGS BEHIND DEMAND

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 6 Jul 86 p 4

[Article by Nadir Makanisi: "The Arab Countries' Iron and Steel Production Meets Only One Quarter Of Their Actual Needs"]

[Text] The increase in the consumption of iron and steel products is an index of any given country's economic and social development, since increased consumption of iron and steel products is related to the volume and diversity of consumer industries. Similarly, the increased use of such products in several main economic sectors reflects the expansion and development of these sectors, as well as the level of economic and social development in general.

The iron and steel products trade exchange seminar held in Damascus during the last week of June by the Arab Iron and Steel Federation heard several valuable working papers presented by the seminar's participants.

Director General of the State Organization for Domestic Trade in Metals and Building Materials 'Aql Hammud presented a working paper entitled "The Growth In Consumption of Iron and Steel Products in Syria," in which he pointed out that ascertaining the actual situation in the commercial exchange of iron and steel products is an important, in fact the most important, facet in analyzing a country's relationship with the world market and understanding the circumstances and development potentials of this industry itself, which in turn will help provide better conditions for creating more balanced trade relations and encouraging and promoting trade among the Arab countries themselves.

It has been proven beyond doubt that the isolated implementation of trade policies by each Arab country has weakened the Arabs' negotiating power, and has thus reduced opportunities for achieving Arab economic and commercial integration.

Syria Supports All Arab Agreements

Following this train of thought, which centers around the importance of Arab economic integration and the need to encourage Arab trade through an Arab common market, Syria has supported all Arab agreements for encouraging the development and promotion of economic relations among the Arab countries, including the establishment of Arab investment projects and joint Arab projects. Syria's general national economic strategy up to the year 2000, as laid down in the 1975-81 development plan, stressed the importance of observing the principle of Arab economic integration in national economic planning, giving planning priority to completing the material infrastructure for socialism in Syria, and supporting the country's unified progress by encouraging Arab investment projects.

The Growing Demand For Iron and Steel Products

Hammud pointed out that implementing the country's sought-after development programs requires vast material and human efforts. Ever since the early Seventies Syria has seen extensive activity in several economic and construction areas, the most important being state projects, which have come to include all such areas as dams, bridges, ports, railroads, and electricity and water networks, and a vast building boom and the construction of housing complexes. Inasmuch as local production cannot meet these growing needs for iron and steel products, we have had to resort to imports to meet Syria's development demands. There has been a significant increase in the demand for iron and steel products; in the case of one product, iron cable, demand has risen from 200,000 tons in 1975 to 496,000 tons in 1980 to 635,000 tons in 1985. In other words, demand has tripled in 10 years. The same trend can be observed with respect to industrial iron, demand for which has risen from 160,000 tons in 1980 to 249,000 tons in 1983.

The situation which exists in Syria can also be found in all the Arab countries. Most of their iron and steel needs are met through imports, since the Arab countries' total production of end-product iron and steel products meets only one-quarter of their needs, the remaining three-quarters being supplied through imports.

On the national level, demand will continue to rise during the period 1986-1990, and by 1990 the demand for industrial iron is expected to reach 288,000 tons, and the projected demand for iron cable is expected to reach 639,000 tons. This means that we will continue to rely on imports at the same rate as now unless local production is increased, either through increasing the present production capacity for iron cable or by adding new production units to help meet the increasing needs for iron cable, industrial iron, or other products.

Hammud attributes this increased demand for iron cable to the growth of the building sector, not only in Syria but in most other Arab countries.

Regulating the Importation and Distribution of Iron

The increased demand for iron and steel products in Syria has necessitated new ways of dealing with both the world and the domestic markets, since foreign trade is an expression of any given country's political and economic understanding of the nature of international relations, and domestic trade is a translation and practical application of that understanding.

For this reason, the importation and distribution of the products the country needs must be regulated, by establishing specialized organizations to handle the import process and other organizations which will ensure that these requirements reach the consumers.

Greater Cooperation Among Arab Countries and Support For Joint Arab Projects Is Necessary

At the end of his working paper, Director General 'Aql Hammud pointed out that the gap between the Arab countries' production of end-product iron and steel products and their consumption of such products forces us to seriously consider trying to develop this industry and increase its existing production capacity. We cannot always depend on the world market, since our inability to control imports might result in certain bottlenecks, such as those Syria suffered for several years with respect to iron cable, particularly during 1973, when there was an import shortage because of Syria's circumstances during the October war of liberation.

Thus it can be said that a guaranteed market can be sought only if there is coordination and cooperation among the Arab countries, either through establishing the various components of this industry or through encouraging trade in iron and steel products among the Arab countries themselves.

Strengthening bilateral cooperation among Arab countries and supporting joint Arab projects will contribute greatly to creating a foundation on which true, fruitful cooperation among Arab countries can be based.

The first step is to free ourselves from our narrow regional outlook and proceed on the assumption that the Arab world can be economically integrated. This will be of real benefit, not only to Syria alone, but to all Arab countries. It can be said that from the developing countries' point of view, establishing an iron and steel industry means not only the establishment of a specific industry, but also a resultant essential change in the nature of economic and trade relations with the world market, since the establishment of this industry will mean the availability of many products now being imported, which in turn will mean an attempt to reduce dependence on and subservience to the world market.

Table 1. Growing Demand For Iron Cable, in Tons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Local Production</u>	<u>Imports</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Import/Local Ratio</u>
1980	100,000	396,000	496,000	3.9 times
1981	100,000	450,000	550,000	4.5
1982	75,000	580,000	665,000	6.8
1983	105,000	620,000	725,000	5.9
1984	100,000	670,500	770,500	6.7
1985	100,000	535,000	635,000	5.3

Table 2. Growing Demand for Industrial Iron, in Tons

<u>Year</u>	<u>Local Production</u>	<u>Imports</u>	<u>Total</u>
1980	-	160,000	160,000
1981	-	176,000	176,000
1982	-	212,000	212,000
1983	-	260,000	260,000
1984	-	286,000	286,000
1985	-	249,250	249,250

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SYRIA

BRIEFS

ISRAELI EXPROPRIATION OF WATER RESOURCES--[From the press review] Under the headline "The Golan Arabs' Appeal Is an Obvious Warning to All Arabs," AL-BA'TH says: By expropriating water resources and agricultural land and by surrounding them with fences and mines, the Zionists impose the other part of their strategy, which is to expel Arab residents from Arab lands. This gives importance to the warning issued by the Golan Arabs. The expropriation of Lebanese water was one of Israel's main objectives when it invaded Lebanon. When the land loses its water and Arab residents are subjected to the occupying Zionists' shelling and their Nazi measures, the displacement of these residents from their land becomes inevitable. The situation from which the Golan Arabs and the Arabs of southern Lebanon are suffering is also being imposed on the land and residents of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The West Bank constitutes the water reservoir for the Zionist settlers in the remaining part of occupied Palestine, exactly as the occupied Golan Heights constitute a water reservoir for northern Palestine and the Palestinian valleys. [Text] [Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0430 GMT 25 Aug 86 JN] /6662

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AFGHANISTAN

WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS SEEN AS PLOY

Paris LE MONDE in French 2 Aug 86 p 3

[Article by Homayoun Tandar, representative of the Jamiat Islami Afghanistan in France]

[Text] Geneva (AFP)--With the official opening of the eighth round of negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan on Thursday, 31 July, at the Palace of the United Nations, discussions aimed at finding a solution to the Afghan question reached the heart of the matter, taking up the problem of the schedule for the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Gorbachev's proposal of withdrawing six Soviet regiments before the end of the year could promote a resumption of negotiations, the seventh round of which got bogged down in this same subject in May.

However, the total withdrawal of the Soviet Army from Afghanistan remains the main bone of contention between Pakistanis and Afghans, with Islamabad refusing to hear of a plan of withdrawal spread out over 4 years, as suggested by Kabul.

The Kremlin is withdrawing six regiments from Afghanistan. Let us note, first of all, that the decision will have no military effect. The withdrawal of 6,000 men from an occupying force of 150,000 is obviously of paltry significance. This is anything but disengagement. Actually, the Soviets are camouflaging a diametrically opposing move. They are in fact replacing conscript with professional soldiers capable of carrying out commando operations, the only means they have of countering the resistance's control of nearly the entire territory. Far from reducing its military involvement in Afghanistan, the USSR is daily stepping up the pressure and the world should make no mistake about it.

However, Gorbachev is anxious to give this minimum event a political significance, and it is within such a context that one should examine the news. Negotiations on the alleged withdrawal of Soviet troops resumed in Geneva just before the UN General Assembly would debate the Afghan question. Under such conditions, the USSR is forced to occupy the political terrain.

These negotiations will enter the seventh "prolonged" phase. The label alone suffices to express the absence of concrete results. The situation is totally blocked. The USSR is demanding as a precondition to any negotiation on substance Pakistan's recognition of the puppet regime in Kabul. However, Pakistan has consistently repeated that this demand is as absurd as it is unacceptable, that it exposes the Soviets' unwillingness to proceed to any real political settlement of the conflict.

So far, the Soviets have been mainly concerned with the continuation of these pointless negotiations, endeavoring to lend a certain credibility to the regime in Kabul and limit the effects of condemnation they have encouraged themselves by invading Afghanistan. But their diplomatic immobility is now in dangerous contrast with the continued political progress of the resistance.

In 7 years, the USSR has not succeeded in solidifying the regime in Kabul in the slightest. The latter has practically no function normally reserved for the government. In contrast, all parties representing the resistance formed an alliance in March 1985 that has become the sole legitimate political expression of the Afghan people. Backed by this union, which is gaining in consistency in the field, Professor Rabbani went to Washington, Paris and Riyad in June as the spokesman for the alliance. The success he enjoyed in these capitals, along with other marks of support (in particular, the recent vote by the European Parliament and the position taken by the French Government), shows that the diplomatic takeoff of the resistance has reached a point of no return.

The Soviets have fallen into their own trap. They claim to be willing to negotiate. Since Gorbachev has come to power, they have tried to change their image. They are therefore doomed to find a political solution for Afghanistan. Gorbachev was misinformed by his cumbersome administrative machine. By calling attention to this tiny troop withdrawal, he probably played the part of the loser, showing his losing hand and revealing his weakness. The diplomatic terrain is now mined for the USSR. Gorbachev was wrong to rush in. He is doomed to find the resistance as his main interlocutor.

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AFGHANISTAN

BRIEFS

COMMUNICATIONS PROGRESS--Kabul, August 31, BAKHTAR--Much progress has been accomplished in the sphere of communication services in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, DRA, and the number of communication projects have increased considerably for example, over 17 thousand automatic telephone lines were active throughout the country prior to the April Revolution of 1978, whereas now this figure has reached to 27 thousand lines. The automatic telephone lines for Kabul New City (Chahr-e Naw) will be increased by 2,600 lines in the next six months raising the total number of lines to 5,600. The telephone line in Shar Shah Mina, an area of Kabul city, which has presently 3,000 lines, will be increased by 4,600 lines during the next five years. A 14-hour reliable communication telephone and telegraph link between Kabul and the centres of all provinces will be established in all provinces of the DRA under the First Five Year Development Plan (1987-1991). The establishment of an inter-city telephone centre and a central telegraph office in Kabul, and extension of the automatic telephone apparatus in Konduz and Ghazni Provinces with a capacity of 1,400 lines are envisaged in the plan. [Text] [Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0421 GMT 1 Sep 86 LD] /6662

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